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STAAT, STADT, SUBJEKT:

The Body and the City in
Contemporary Austrian
Fiction

Philip Joseph Bolton

Thesis for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Durham University
School of Modern Languages and Cultures
2012

Staat; Stadt; Subjekt: The Body and the City in Contemporary Austrian Fiction

ABSTRACT

Since the publication in 1960 of Hans Lebert's, *Die Wolfshaut*, Austrian fiction has been dominated by the so-called *Anti-Heimatroman* or 'critical regional novel', which deploys the provincial setting as a key vehicle for the socially-critical representation of the Austrian nation. Such is the dominance of the *Anti-Heimatroman* that critics have identified a concern with regional Austria as one of the few constants of post-war Austrian writing. In the vast majority of the literature produced since the 1960s, therefore, Vienna has no role to play; the capital has occupied only a marginal position on Austria's literary landscape. Recently, however, critics have acknowledged a return to the city in Austrian fiction. This thesis provides the first detailed account of this 'urban turn', focussing on the question of how the literary text's socially-critical function has evolved as a result of the transition from province to metropolis. Placing its focus at the intersection of the body and (primarily urban) space, it provides readings of five novels published during the 1990s and 2000s. Its five case studies draw on the work of Michel Foucault and Walter Benjamin to explore the role that the subject's interaction with urban topographies plays in contemporary literature's critical engagement with Austrian realities.

Chapter One challenges the established view that the *Anti-Heimatroman* became obsolete during the 1980s. It examines the construction of the gendered Heimat in Norbert Gstrein's *Das Register* (1992), and explores in particular the extent to which Gstrein's work draws on the generic norms of the *Anti-Heimatroman*. Turning to novels that are set in Vienna, subsequent chapters isolate two phases in the evolution of literature's engagement with the realities of present-day and historical Austria. Readings of Lilian Faschinger's *Wiener Passion* (1999) and Doron Rabinovici's *Suche nach M.* (1997) show that during the 1990s, the city replaces the province as a privileged backdrop for critical engagement with the problematic discourses that structure Austria's post-war identity politics. By contrast, the post-*Jahrtausendwende* texts discussed here, Arno Geiger's *Es geht uns gut* (2005) and Thomas Stangl's *Ihre Musik* (2006), are marked by a turn inward, as writers become more interested in the emotional, psychological and existential orientation of the urban subject. But this turn inward results ultimately in a shift outward, enabling Austrian writers to focus on more universal socio-political issues.

This thesis explores the development of literary engagement with Austrian realities during two decades of Austria's literary history that remain conspicuously under-researched. The contemporaneity of the urban turn demands a critical focus on younger authors who have traditionally stood in the long shadows cast by their better-established colleagues. This unconventional approach, which leads away from the Austrian canon, is the source of second contribution that this thesis makes to Austrian Studies. By engaging explicitly with novels produced by younger authors, this thesis asks what the work of newer constellations of Austrian writers can tell us about the changing status of literature, and of its relationship to the society of which it is a product.

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INTRODUCTION:

THE URBAN TURN IN CONTEMPORARY AUSTRIAN FICTION

In 2007, a short essay written by Austria's celebrated *Literaturpapst*, Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, appeared in the quarterly publication of the *Österreichischer Bibliothekenverband*. Entitled 'Provinziell, urban, global',¹ the essay plots briefly the trajectory of Austrian writing since 1960. As Schmidt-Dengler suggests, the publication in that year of Hans Lebert's debut novel, *Die Wolfshaut*,² marks the beginning of a period lasting some thirty years during which 'die meisten Autoren aus der (so genannten) österreichischen Provinz [kommen] und ihre Texte auch in dieser angesiedelt [sind]'.³ In the vast majority of the literature published during this period, therefore, 'Wien spielt keine Rolle'; there is no trace of 'urbane Literatur, wie sie ein Musil oder ein Doderer gepflegt hätten'.⁴ On the face of it, there is nothing remarkable about this contention: the prevalence of the provincial setting in Austrian literature is a well-documented phenomenon. Both W.G. Sebald and Schmidt-Dengler himself have noted that a concern with regional Austria, particularly in its guise as the privileged locus of *Heimat*, provides 'eine der Konstanten der sonst so schwer definierbaren österreichischen Literatur'.⁵ The dominance of the provincial setting is also reflected in scholarship, where variations on the epithet 'Provinz' have been deployed as a cipher for Austrian literature at large.⁶

¹ Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, 'Provinziell, urban, global: zu Tendenzen in der österreichischen Erzählprosa der Gegenwart', *BüchereiPerspektiven*, 01/07 (2007), 10-13 (p.10).

² Hans Lebert, *Die Wolfshaut* (Munich: Classen, 1960). It is worth noting that Schmidt-Dengler himself cites Hermann Broch's *Bergroman* or *die Verzauberung*, published originally in 1958, as the first example of an *Anti-Heimatroman*. Cf. *Bruchlinien: Essays zur Österreichischen Literatur 1945-1990*, 3rd edn (Salzburg: Residenz, 2010), p. 288.

³ Schmidt-Dengler, 'Provinziell', p. 10.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Cf. Schmidt-Dengler, *Bruchlinien*, p. 404 and W. G. Sebald, *Unheimliche Heimat: Essays zur österreichischen Literatur* (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer, 2004).

⁶ Cf., for example, Ernst Grohottolsky (ed.), *Provinz sozusagen: österreichische Literaturgeschichte* (Graz: Droschl, 1995) and Franz Schuh (ed.), *Aus der Welt der Provinz: Texte zur österreichischen Gegenwartsliteratur* (Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1982).

As Schmidt-Dengler notes, an explanation for Vienna's prolonged absence from the literary landscape of post-war Austria is ready at hand, in the form of the so-called *Anti-Heimatroman*, or 'critical regional novel'. The sheer volume of literature produced in Austria during the post-war years that has been shown to draw on the generic conventions of the *Anti-Heimatroman* legitimates to a certain extent Robert Menasse's rather sweeping claim that this 'eigenständig österreichische, in anderen Ländern nicht existierende Gattung' has become 'die dominanteste Form der Literatur in der Zweiten Republik'.⁷ One of the most crucial characteristics of the *Anti-Heimatroman* is its socially-critical function. Against the background of the *Sozialpartnerschaft*, a political system founded on consensus that necessarily occludes political debate at national level, Austrian writers have increasingly taken on the role 'which "Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition" is said to have in Great Britain'.⁸ The literary text itself has played a crucial role in this socially-critical endeavour, functioning as 'das wichtigste und größte Forum des Widerstandes [...] in denen [Autorinnen und Autoren] Mißstände, Strukturen und System zum Teil überhöht und verschlüsselt, zum Teil aber sehr konkret anprangern'.⁹ Ritchie Robertson and Katrin Kohl endorse this claim, noting that 'Austrian literature is interwoven with Austrian history, often providing trenchant critiques of government policies and evolving hard-hitting narratives of resistance'.¹⁰ While the socially-critical tendency in post-war Austrian literature reached its zenith during the 1980s, following the series of political scandals that culminated in the Waldheim Affair, it arguably manifests itself most sustainedly in the *Anti-Heimatroman*. A number of critics, among them Norbert Mecklenburg and Menasse himself, have noted that the trend's socially-critical resonance extends beyond its regional setting, but at the same time is crucially bound up with it.

⁷ Menasse's suggestion that the *Anti-Heimatroman* is a uniquely Austrian phenomenon, for example, is qualified by Peter Blickle's observations in the sixth chapter of his *Heimat: A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2002).

⁸ Sigrid Schmidt Bortenschlager, 'From Provocation to Appropriation', in *From High Priests to Desecrators: Contemporary Austrian Writers* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), pp. 11-25 (p. 12).

⁹ Klaus Zeyringer, *Innerlichkeit und Öffentlichkeit: österreichische Literatur der achtziger Jahre* (Tübingen: Franke, 1992), p. 98.

¹⁰ Katrin Kohl and Ritchie Robertson, 'Introduction', in *A History of Austrian Literature: 1918-2000* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2006), ed. by Kohl and Robertson, pp. 1-20 (p. 10).

For Menasse, as for Mecklenburg,¹¹ the mordantly critical representations of regional Austria set forth in the *Anti-Heimatroman* are best understood as 'Auseinandersetzung[en] mit der Realität in Österreich, an einem bestimmten Ort zu einer bestimmten Zeit'.¹² As Menasse shows, the list of writers who have taken advantage of the trend's socially-critical potential adds up to 'ein beinahe vollständiges Who's who der modernen österreichischen Literatur': it includes such authors as Gerhard Fritsch, Thomas Bernhard, Peter Handke, Elfriede Jelinek, Michael Scharang, Gernot Wolfgruber, Franz Innerhofer, Gerd Jonke, Marie-Therese Kirschbaumer and Norbert Gstrein.¹³ Such is the dominance of the *Anti-Heimatroman* that Menasse, writing in 1995, is able to ask the following—rhetorical—question of the readers of his *Österreich-Aufsatz, Das Land ohne Eigenschaften*:

Wo ist der große Stadtroman nach Doderer? Der zeitgenössische Wien-Roman, der Graz-, Klagenfurt- oder zumindest Bludenz-Roman? Es gibt ihn nicht. Das Beste, was die Literatur der Zweiten Republik hervorgebracht hat, beschäftigt sich mit dem Desaster der Provinz auf eine Weise, daß wir über den Entwicklungsbogen von der Nazi-Zeit bis zum zerstörerischen Massentourismus der heutigen Tage von dieser Literatur anschaulicher informiert werden, als es der dünnen Abstraktheit soziologischer Untersuchungen möglich ist.¹⁴

An answer to Menasse's question is provided in Schmidt-Dengler's 2007 essay. Concluding his brief account of 'die eindrucksvolle Serie von Erzählungen aus der österreichischen Provinz, die oft als negative Heimatromane gelesen wurden',¹⁵ Schmidt-Dengler notes: 'Es scheint, als würden die Autorinnen und Autoren die Provinz allmählich verlassen und wieder in die Hauptstadt, in die einst so gefeierte Metropole zurückkehren wollen'.¹⁶ The restrictive scope of Schmidt-Dengler's essay denies him the chance to expand on this potentially significant statement, allowing him space only to outline a number of literary texts that conform to the tendency that he identifies; furthermore, his untimely death a year after the essay was published means that it remains his final word

¹¹ Norbert Mecklenburg, *Erzählte Provinz: Regionalismus und Moderne im Roman* (Königstein bei Taunus: Athenäum, 1982), p. 42.

¹² Norbert Menasse, *Das war Österreich: Gesammelte Essays zum Land ohne Eigenschaften*, ed. by Eva Schörkhuber (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 2005), p. 118.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

¹⁵ Schmidt-Dengler, 'Provinziell', p. 10

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

on the subject, but by no means the end of the matter. In fact, Schmidt-Dengler's observations on the urban turn in Austrian literature were alluded to once more, albeit tangentially, in 2010, this time in a contribution to the Austrian daily, *Die Presse*, penned by his former colleague in Vienna, Wolfgang Müller-Funk. What Schmidt-Dengler identifies in fairly neutral terms as one of 'einige Tendenzen in der jüngsten österreichischen Literatur',¹⁷ however, Müller-Funk frames in the long-running debate surrounding the existence and future viability of a specifically Austrian literature. The arguments that he deploys are therefore familiar ones: Austrian literature, he claims, exists only in Austria, and then merely as 'ein Auslaufmodell, die Angelegenheit einer Handvoll Spezialisten';¹⁸ the introduction of the more inclusive umbrella-term 'deutschsprachige Literatur' has reduced Austrian writing to 'ein bloßer Dialekt im Konzert des Deutschen'.¹⁹ But the final nail in Austrian literature's already tightly-sealed coffin might, he suggests, be hammered in by the very development that Vienna's newfound appeal among Austria's authors both signals and accelerates, namely the impending obsolescence of the *Anti-Heimatroman*:

Im Kontext einer deutschsprachigen Literatur fungierte [die Anti-Heimatliteratur] als das Fremde im Eigenen, solange das gemeinsame Interesse an einer literarischen Verhandlung einer prekären Vergangenheit im Brennpunkt des öffentlichen Interesses stand. [...] [W]enn 50 Jahre nach dem Tod Heimito von Doderers die Stadt [...] ins Zentrum des Interesses rückt, dann muss man sich die Frage vorlegen, was das für Konsequenzen für eine spezifisch österreichische Literatur hat und ob nicht mit dem Auslaufen der Anti Heimatliteratur ein entscheidendes Moment der Literatura austriaca abhanden zu kommen droht.²⁰

Schmidt-Dengler's essay and Müller-Funk's article each raise more questions than answers. The enforced brevity of both critics' observations limits them to offering a brief outline of the urban turn along with a list of the novels in which it is evident. Yet in view of the provincial setting's status as a defining feature of post-war Austrian literature, this development is clearly in need of more thoroughgoing analysis than Müller-Funk and Schmidt-Dengler are able to

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁸ Wolfgang Müller-Funk, 'ein Koffer namens Österreich', *Die Presse*, 16 January 2010 <<http://diepresse.com/home/spectrum/zeichenderzeit/533178/Ein-Koffer-namens-Oesterreich>> [Accessed 29 November 2011] (para. 2).

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., para. 12.

provide. This is a need that this thesis seeks to address. Offering critical readings of five novels published between 1992 and 2006, I seek to understand the ways in which the relationship between literature and nation has evolved as a result of the shift in focus from province to metropolis. Placing my focus at the intersection between the body and (primarily urban) space, my concern is to determine the role that the subject's interaction with the topographies that are set forth in the text corpus plays in each author's engagement with Austrian realities.

Positing the urban turn as the terminal developmental stage of the *Anti-Heimatroman*, I begin with an examination of Norbert Gstrein's *Das Register*, published in 1992. Gstrein's third novel has been held up as a paradigmatic example of genre's final incarnation as a vehicle for exposing the detrimental effects on the provincial milieu of the boom in tourism that began in Austria immediately after the Second World War.²¹ I then undertake critical readings of four novels with Viennese settings, which are grouped here according to the decade of their publication. This thesis therefore explores the development of literary engagement with Austrian realities across two discrete but interlinked trajectories, one geographical, the other chronological. By comparing novels with provincial and urban settings, I extrapolate the continuities and changes that have occurred in Austrian writers' literary treatment of nation as a result of the transition from province to metropolis. This project's more pronounced chronological element, meanwhile, allows it to reconstruct the evolution of literary engagement with Austrian realities during two decades of Austria's literary history that remain conspicuously under-researched. Viewed through the prism of academic scholarship, post-war Austrian writing emerges as a profoundly limited category. Scholarly work in the field of Austrian Studies continues to focus almost exclusively on the work of Thomas Bernhard and Peter Handke, two figures who have functioned, as Klaus Zeyringer suggests, as 'eine Art *pars pro toto* österreichischer Literatur'.²² More recently, this illustrious twosome, billed as Austrian literature's 'High Priest' and 'Desecrator'

²¹ A useful examination of literature's—often antagonistic—relationship with the tourism industry, is offered by Wolfgang Straub in his *Willkommen: Literatur und Fremdenverkehr in Österreich* (Vienna: Sonderzahl, 2001).

²² Zeyringer, *Innerlichkeit*, p. 66.

respectively,²³ have been forced to share the critical limelight with Elfriede Jelinek, who cemented her position in the exclusive pantheon of major Austrian writers when she won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2004. Finally, there is evidence of sustained critical interest in the work of Ingeborg Bachmann, whose lyric *oeuvre* in particular continues to generate considerable interest from critics. The contemporaneity of the urban turn, by contrast, demands that the critical spotlight be focussed on authors who established themselves much more recently, and who have traditionally stood in the improbably long shadows cast by particular constellations of their better-established colleagues. This unconventional approach, which leads away from the Austrian canon, is the source of second contribution that this thesis makes to the field of Austrian Studies. By engaging explicitly with novels produced by younger authors, this thesis asks what the work of newer constellations of Austrian writers can tell us about the changing status of literature, and of its relationship to the society of which it is a product.

NATION; LITERATUR: 'NATIONALLITERATUR'?

It seems to have become convention for any study of Austrian writing to begin with an allusion to the long-running debate surrounding the question of what Schmidt-Dengler has referred to as 'das Österreichische an der österreichischen Literatur'.²⁴ This study is no exception. But while the goals of this thesis as set out above clearly necessitate discussion of the relationship between literature and nation, the need to reference the debate surrounding the viability of Austrian literature *per se* stems from the brief accounts of the urban turn that already exist. As we have seen, Schmidt-Dengler and Müller-Funk offer two distinct interpretations of this phenomenon. Müller-Funk views the urban turn with a considerable degree of unease, which is communicated from the outset in his article's subtitle 'Sie hat aus Österreich erst Österreich gemacht: unsere

²³ Cf. Schmid-Bortenschlager, 'Provocation', p. 14.

²⁴ Cf. Schmidt-Dengler, *Bruchlinien*, p. 15.

Anti-Heimatliteratur. Jetzt kommt sie in die Jahre. Was nun? Was folgt? Zur Zukunft der österreichischen Literatur'.²⁵

For Müller Funk, the urban turn signals the irrefutable demise of the *Anti-Heimatroman* and thus casts into doubt the survival of a specifically Austrian literature in the broader sphere of Germanophone writing. While his question about the future of Austrian literature in the wake of the urban turn is legitimate, however, there are a number of reasons for altering the terms in which it is posed. Austrian literature emerges from Müller-Funk's observations as a static construct that stands or falls by virtue of the level of popularity enjoyed by the *Anti-Heimatroman*. This notion draws on a closed, and arguably obsolete, conception of the relationship between literature and nation, which locates the 'essence' of *Nationalliteratur* in a specific genre and simultaneously abstracts that genre from the social, political, cultural and historical context from which it emerged. It is also worth noting that Müller-Funk's refusal to take into account the cultural specificity of either Vienna or Austria in his analysis of the 'plight' of Austrian literature leads him to perpetrate precisely the kind of over-generalizing that he perceives in the re-categorization of Austrian literature as a mere component of the Germanophone tradition. This generalizing tendency is also visible in his proposed solution to the imminent demise of Austrian literature. In place of the Germanophone tradition, Müller-Funk proposes the formulation of 'eine zentraleuropäische, transnationale Literaturgeschichte' grounded in '[...] die Gemeinsamkeiten mit den anderssprachigen Nachbarkulturen' that are a product of 'einer gemeinsamen "kakanischen" Vergangenheit'.²⁶

While Müller-Funk's appeal for a kind of Central European literary conglomerate is understandable in view of globalization, which calls into question the continuing viability of the nation *per se*, there are also obvious problems associated with it. Müller-Funk's recourse to Central Europe's 'kakanische Vergangenheit', in combination with an attempt to distance Austrian literature from the Germanophone context, could be construed as ideologically suspect. These manoeuvres replicate the problematic discourses of

²⁵ Müller-Funk, 'Ein Koffer namens Österreich'.

²⁶ Ibid., para. 13.

restoration and continuity that underpinned Austria's attempt to abdicate responsibility for its National Socialist past. At the very least, an exclusive focus on the common Habsburg roots of the Central European countries obscures the particularity of Austria's experience during the years that followed the *Anschluss*, as well as forcibly attenuating the capacity of the literary text to function as a vehicle of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. Rather more innocuous, at least at first glance, is Schmidt-Dengler's more open definition of the urban turn as one of 'einige Tendenzen' in contemporary Austrian writing. But while this definition can certainly stand without much need for analysis, when read in abstraction it risks underplaying the potential significance of the trend under discussion. This thesis therefore proceeds from a definition of the relationship between literature and nation that is located between those of Schmidt-Dengler and Müller-Funk, and which is formulated clearly by Klaus Zeyringer. Zeyringer understands literature and nation (defined as 'Kulturraum und Staatsgebilde')²⁷ as contingent and mutually-constitutive processes that evolve in constant dialogue with one another across an historical continuum. He places the critic at the intersection of these constructs, allotting her the task of teasing out 'Entwicklungen und Brüche, Strukturen und Zusammenhänge' that support and govern the interaction between them.²⁸

Zeyringer's insistence on the primacy of 'Kontext' calls into question the validity of Müller-Funk's concern that the urban turn spells the end of Austrian literature's specificity in a broader sphere of Germanophone writing. Scrutinized from within Zeyringer's more inclusive paradigm, the capital's renewed appeal among Austrian writers must be redefined as a significant, but by no means fatal, trend in a literature that emerges both as a product of, and in dialogue with, a set of socio-political and cultural conditions that are specific to Austria. Zeyringer's paradigm thus endows the urban turn with a set of broader implications. Literature's status as a phenomenon that maintains a 'Wechselbeziehung zu der gesellschaftlichen Realität' means that this metaphorical and literal 'new direction' in Austrian writing is potentially

²⁷ Klaus Zeyringer, *Österreichische Literatur seit 1945: Überblicke, Einschnitte, Wegmarken* (Vienna; Innsbruck; Bosen: Studienverlag, 2008), p. 42.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

symptomatic of changes in the broader cultural, political and social spheres that contribute to Austria's gradual evolution as a national community.²⁹ Zeyringer contends:

Beim Konzept 'Österreichische Literatur' [...] gilt es, eine Differentialdiagnose zu erstellen, 'die von den Symptomen zu den Ursachen vorzudringen gewillt ist, denn sie nimmt wahr, daß mit der Beschwörung des "Österreichischen" die Diskontinuitäten und die empfindlichen Stellen im Verlauf der österreichischen Geschichte nur allzu leicht verdeckt werden'. Um das Staatliche und Nationale soll kein Bogen gemacht, soll auch kein Bedeutungsbogen gespannt werden. Es wird nicht deklariert, es wird analysiert.³⁰

But in the context of contemporary Austrian writing, the broader framework provided by the dialogue between literature and nation is complicated further by a trend that supports and mediates this relationship at the level of the literary text. Zeyringer's insistence that literary trends be treated as symptoms that permit the literary critic to 'diagnose' the state of the nation overlooks the degree to which Austrian writers themselves have taken on this diagnostic role. The preponderance of the socially-critical tendency in contemporary Austrian writing means that an effective literary-historical analysis of 'das Staatliche' or 'das Nationale' in an Austrian context should take into account not only the constantly shifting terms of the broader dialogue between the constructs of literature and nation, but also of the methods and techniques that facilitate the examination of 'das Nationale' in the literary text. In other words, the critic must acknowledge that Austrian literature provides both symptom and diagnosis simultaneously. Nowhere is this situation more evident than in the *Anti-Heimatroman*, whose sociallycritical dynamic has been shown to rely heavily on the relationship that it sets up between the provincial setting and the nation at large. Norbert Mecklenburg contends that the relentlessly negative portrayals of regional Austria that are set forth in the *Anti-Heimatroman* are best understood as 'models' that provide 'eine [...] auf exemplarische Züge und Grundstrukturen gerichtete Schematisierung in verkleinertem Maßstab' in which 'Provinz [...] für [...] einen Staat, eine

²⁹ Ibid., p. 42.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 43. Zeyringer quotes here from Albert Berger, "Zur Funktion des Begriffs der "österreichischen Literatur", in *Österreichische Literatur des 20. Jahrhunderts: französische und österreichische Beiträge*, ed. by S.P. Scheichl and G. Stieg, pp. 25-40 (p. 35).

Gesellschaft steht'.³¹ The 'Provinz als Modell' thus offers a flexible mimetic framework that has been modified in a number of ways in order to function as a vehicle for different forms of social criticism.

This line of argument leads neatly back to Müller-Funk's question about the demise of the *Anti-Heimatroman*, and offers a broader and more productive set of terms in which it might usefully be reformulated. While the gradual shift from province to metropolis cannot be conceived legitimately as the death-knell for the specificity of Austrian literature, it nevertheless suggests a loss of faith in a privileged set of conventions for the representation of nation in the literary text. At the very least, the gradual exodus from the provinces potentially marks a transformation in the dynamics of social criticism in contemporary Austrian writing, but it may also signal the gradual attrition of the socially-critical impulse that has been the hallmark of much of the literature produced in the Second Republic. The potential implications of the urban turn therefore reach beyond the demise of a single genre, and raise questions about the changing social function of Austrian literature at large. In order to assess the potential significance of these ramifications, we need to examine briefly the development of the *Anti-Heimatroman*.

'SIE ALLE STEHEN GEGEN HEIMAT',³²

Any attempt to provide a comprehensive analysis of the *Anti-Heimatroman* is an undertaking fraught with complexity, a circumstance that emerges not least because the trend has generated a considerable body of scholarly literature. While the volume of critical interest signals the dominant position that the *Anti-Heimatroman* occupies in Austria's post-war literary canon, the enormous variety of different interpretations has muddied the waters considerably with regard to a number of fundamental issues surrounding it. Critics disagree on matters as seemingly innocuous as nomenclature and life-span,³³ not to

³¹ Mecklenburg, *Erzählte Provinz*, p. 42.

³² Zeyringer, *Österreichische Literatur*, p. 132.

³³ The trend's nomenclature is problematic because a number of variations have gained currency in critical responses. An attempt to systematize the difference between 'Anti-Heimatliteratur' and 'Anti-Heimat-Literatur', for example, can be found in Wilhelm Solms, 'Zum

mention the specific characteristics and constants that an *Anti-Heimatroman* ought to evince. Aside from the debate on these taxonomic difficulties, critical opinion also differs on the question of precisely what the critical representations of regional Austria set forth in the *Anti-Heimatroman* were intended to achieve. The most controversial answer to this question is also the most compelling. It is provided by Robert Menasse in the concluding sections of *Das Land ohne Eigenschaften*. Two aspects of Menasse's approach to *Anti-Heimatliteratur* are particularly important, but at the same time particularly contentious. On the one hand, Menasse proceeds from a definition of *Heimat* that equates it in the first instance with an affirmative national identity, a manoeuvre that permits him to follow Müller-Funk in elevating the *Anti-Heimatroman* to the status of *Nationalliteratur*. Menasse's conception of national literature, however, is in fact more compatible with Zeyringer's insistence on the interdependence of 'Text und Kontext', and with Mecklenburg's schematization of the provincial setting as a 'model' of the Austrian nation. Drawing particularly on Franz Innerhofer's *Schöne Tage*,³⁴ Menasse extends the critical resonance of the *Anti-Heimatroman* beyond its regional setting, suggesting that its 'ästhetische und inhaltliche Besonderheiten Rückschlüsse auf die Besonderheiten der gesellschaftlichen Organisationsform, der Gewordenheit und der aktuellen Verfasstheit einer Nation erlauben'.³⁵

Besides this assessment of the mechanics of social criticism in the *Anti-Heimatroman*, Menasse also provides an overview of the trend's historical development that runs contrary to the suggestion, prevalent in critical responses to the *Anti-Heimatroman*, that the trend became 'extinct' toward the end of the 1970s.³⁶ The unconventional character of Menasse's approach both to the function and to the chronology of the *Anti-Heimatroman*, however, is by no means its most debatable element. More problematic by far is his penchant for sweeping statements, which is a persistent characteristic of his particular

Wandel der "Anti-Heimatliteratur", in *Wesen und Wandel der Heimatliteratur. Am Beispiel der österreichischen Literatur seit 1945.*, ed. by Karl Konrad Polheim (Bern: Peter Lang, 1989), pp. 173-189.

³⁴ Franz Innerhofer, *Schöne Tage*, (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1974).

³⁵ Menasse, *Das war Österreich*, p. 116.

³⁶ Cf. Jürgen Koppensteiner, 'Anti-Heimatliteratur in Österreich. Zur literarischen Heimatwelle der siebziger Jahre', *Modern Austrian Literature*, 15 (1982), 1-11.

polemic style. In combination with his refusal to make explicit and detailed reference to critical responses to the *Anti-Heimatroman* that diverge from his own interpretation, Menasse's tendency toward generalization means that this study cannot legitimately take his comments on either issue at face-value. My intention in this section, therefore, is to set them against the key approaches to the questions of function and chronology that emerge from other critical responses to this problematic literary trend. My primary concern here is to determine the extent of the socially-critical resonance that can legitimately be attributed to the *Anti-Heimatroman*, and in particular the ways in which that resonance might be said to extend beyond the provincial environment that it takes as its setting. I then investigate briefly the chronological development of the *Anti-Heimatroman*, thereby providing an overview of the literary genealogy that this thesis will carry forward.

Any critical analysis of the *Anti-Heimatroman* is complicated even before it begins by the presence in its generic nomenclature of one of the most versatile—and indeed opaque—concepts to emerge from Germanophone culture. A working definition of the term *Heimat* is essential for an understanding of the ways in which the concept has been instrumentalized and problematized in the cultural and political spheres of post-war Austria. Elizabeth Boa and Rachel Palfreyman define *Heimat* as follows:

Heimat is a physical place, a social space or bounded medium of some kind which provides a sense of security and belonging. As a surrounding medium, Heimat protects the self by stimulating identification whether with family, locality, nation, folk or race, native dialect or tongue, or whatever else may fill the empty signifier to fuel a process of definition or of buttressing which feeds and sustains a sense of identity.³⁷

What is missing from this gloss is a reference to the term's etymology, which locates the 'bounded medium' that *Heimat* constitutes squarely in the provincial environment. Andrea Kunne notes that the term referred originally to

³⁷ Elizabeth Boa and Rachel Palfreyman, *Heimat; A German Dream: Regional Loyalties and National Identity in German Culture 1890-1990* (New York; Oxford: OUP, 2000). A comprehensive exploration of the term *Heimat* and its usage in Germanophone culture (and beyond) can be found in the introductory chapter of Peter Blickle's *Heimat: A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2002). Celia Applegate provides a useful overview of the term's development in a specifically German context in the introduction to her *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; Oxford: University of California Press, 2003), pp. 1-20. The volume *Heimat: At the Intersection of Space and Memory*, ed. by Frederike Eigler and Jens Kugele (Berlin: DeGruyter 2012) brings together contributions that consider manifestations of *Heimat* in contemporary culture.

‘Elternhaus und Hof’, first becoming a ‘subjektiv geladener Wortbegriff’ in the course of the nineteenth century.³⁸ Under the auspices of the *Heimatkunstabewegung* in Germany, and what Karlheinz Rossbacher refers to as the *Provinzkunstprogramm* in Austria, the term became ideologically loaded.³⁹ The onset of urban modernity, characterized by rapidly-accelerating urbanization and industrialization, was widely perceived as nothing less than a cataclysmic development. The combination of anonymity and sensory overload that were by-products both of the metropolitan experience and of the capitalist relations of production therefore gave rise to a widespread desire for a return to the ‘simpler’ dynamics of the agrarian lifestyle. This desire found one form of expression in the *Heimatroman*. Works by such authors as Peter Rosegger, Felix Pekornig, Max Mell and Karl-Heinrich Waggerl produced representations of rural communities ‘grounded in continuity of the bloodline and an intimate connection to place’,⁴⁰ in which farmers worked in accordance with the cyclical rhythms of nature in order to transform ‘ein fremdes Stück Erde’ into *Heimat*.⁴¹

As its nomenclature suggests, the *Anti-Heimatroman* assigns negative values to the constants of the earlier genre, providing a ‘Kontrafaktur [...] des Heimatromans’.⁴² Alexandra Ludewig describes the transition as follows:

Statt des ‘locus amoenus’, wie die Landschaft im traditionellen [...] Heimatroman beschrieben wird, ist die Natur [im Anti-Heimatroman] gleichermaßen negativ besetzt und in einen ‘locus terribilis’ verkehrt worden. [...] Zumeist läßt sich als Abwandlung ‘die Akzentuierung der “Eintönigkeit”[und] die Geschlossenheit des Raums und seiner Sozialstruktur’ konstatieren, die nicht länger als Ort der Geborgenheit, sondern als beengender, inzestuöser und lasterhafter Bereich angesehen wird. Die Natur

³⁸ Andrea Kunne, *Heimat im Roman, Last oder Lust? Transformationen eines Genres in der österreichischen Nachkriegsliteratur* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1991), p. 7.

³⁹ Cf. Karlheinz Rossbacher, ‘Die Literatur der Heimatkunstabewegung um 1900’, in ‘...als hätte die Erde ein wenig die Lippen geöffnet...’. *Topoi der Heimat und Identität*, ed. by Peter Plener and Peter Zalan (Budapest: Schriftenreihe des ELTE Germanistischen Instituts, 2007), pp. 109-120. <http://magyar-irodalom.elte.hu/palimpszeszt/09_szam/10.htm> [Accessed 29 November 2011] (para. 3).

⁴⁰ J. J. Long, ‘Austrian Prose Fiction 1945-2000’, in *A History of Austrian Literature: 1918-2000*, ed. by Kohl and Robertson, pp. 223-246 (p. 226).

⁴¹ Eugen Thurnher, ‘Plädoyer für den Heimatroman’, in *Wesen und Wandel der Heimatliteratur*, ed. by Polheim, pp. 25-37 (p. 27).

⁴² Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, ‘Die antagonistische Natur: zum Konzept der Anti-Idylle in der neueren österreichischen Prosa’, *Literatur und Kritik*, 4 (1969), 77-85 (p. 79).

wird als menschenfeindlich beschrieben, wobei sie nun zum Spiegel für die mentale Konstitution der Landbevölkerung wird.⁴³

The conventional interpretation of the *Anti-Heimatroman*, which is exemplified in the analyses provided by such critics as Jürgen Koppensteiner and Dagmar Lorenz, suggests that the goal of the trend's 'kreative Auseinandersetzung mit den Themen und Motiven des traditionellen Heimatromans'⁴⁴ was to produce 'eine Heimatdichtung [...] die die Heimatdichter Lügen straft'.⁴⁵ The need to expose the lies that had been propagated in the *Heimatroman* was two-fold: First, the representations of agrarian life that had been constructed in the *Heimatroman* had been improbably, and indefensibly, naive. Eugen Thurnher notes:

Es heißt, der Heimatroman verkläre die dörfliche Welt, seine Zeichnung beruhe nicht auf der Erfahrung der Realität, sondern gehe aus von dem Schema des guten Dorfes, und der schlechten Großstadt, das schlicht an die Realität vorbeigehe. Daraus ergebe sich zwangsläufig, daß die soziale Problematik völlig übersehen werde, da eine falsche Harmonisierung der Gemeinschaft die tiefen menschlichen Grundsätze einfach zudecke.⁴⁶

The unrealistic representation of the Austrian provinces set forth in the *Heimatroman*, however, was of only marginal concern compared to the second objection to the genre that prevailed among serious writers during the post-war years. As Ingeborg Rabenstein-Michel notes, its 'weitgehende ideologische Übereinstimmung mit den völkischen Idealen des Dritten Reiches führte dazu, dass die Heimatliteratur von den Nationalsozialisten nicht nur übernommen, sondern auch kaum verändert propagandistisch eingesetzt werden konnte'.⁴⁷ The work of Karl-Heinrich Waggerl, for instance, had propagated 'ein Reinheitsideal, nach dem Einflüsse von Außen schädlich seien, und damit ein extrem antiaufklärerischer Geist, dessen geistige Nähe zur Naziideologie nicht zu übersehen ist'.⁴⁸ The proximity of Waggerl's outlook to the doctrines of so-

⁴³ Alexandra Ludewig, 'Heimat- und Anti-Heimatliteratur in Österreich', *Seminar*, 33 (1997), 238-258.

⁴⁴ Andrea Kunne, *Heimat im Roman*, p. 2.

⁴⁵ Jürgen Koppensteiner, 'Anti-Heimatliteratur: ein Unterrichtsversuch mit Franz Innerhofers Roman *Schöne Tage*', *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German*, 14 (1981), 9-19 (p. 10).

⁴⁶ Thurnher, 'Plädoyer', p. 31.

⁴⁷ Ingeborg Rabenstein-Michel, 'Bewältigungsinstrument Anti-Heimatliteratur', *Germanica*, 42 (2008), 157-169 <<http://germanic.revues.org/525>> [Accessed June 30th 2011], para. 4.

⁴⁸ Christiaan Janssen, *Abgrenzung und Anpassung: deutsche Kultur zwischen 1930 und 1945 im Spiegel der Referatenorgane Het Duitsche Boek und de Weegschaal* (Münster: Waxmann, 2003), p. 159.

called 'Blut-und-Boden-Ideologie' propelled his work to a prominent position in the National Socialist canon and assured his popularity in 'nationalsozialistische und rechtsnationale Literaturkritik'.⁴⁹ As Dagmar Lorenz suggests, therefore, the inversion of the earlier genre's fundamental topoi in the *Anti-Heimatroman* allowed Austrian writers to 'react to the glorification of villages and small towns by fascists by [...] reproducing the scheme of fascist literature *ex-negativo*'.⁵⁰

Koppensteiner and Lorenz each portray the *Anti-Heimatroman* as a primarily backward-looking literary trend that was intended in the first place to compensate for, or better to 'avenge', the perceived failings of an earlier genre. Thus, while the socially-critical potential of the *Anti-Heimatroman* is seen here to extend beyond the borders of the rural environment in which it is set, the province does not function as a model of the Austrian nation at large. Rather than providing an insight into 'die Gewordenheit und aktuelle Verfasstheit einer Nation', both Koppensteiner and Lorenz see the *Anti-Heimat* province as a device that allows criticism to be levelled specifically at the authors and conventions of the *Heimatroman*.

While there is no doubt that this compensatory impulse had a key role to play in it, the emergence of the *Anti-Heimatroman* cannot be understood fully without recourse to the particular brand of carefully stage-managed identity politics that operated in Austria during the post-war years. Austria's status as the 'first victim' of National Socialist aggression, which was ratified by the Allies in the Moscow Declaration of November 1943, became 'das Fundament des neuen österreichischen Staatwesens'.⁵¹ Its original formulation in the Moscow Declaration had appended a caveat to the victim thesis, stating that Austria's status as 'first victim' was valid only to the extent that it was able to prove the existence of active resistance to National Socialism during the years of the *Anschluss*. Crucially, though, the version of the victim thesis that found its way into the Second Republic's founding document, the *Staatsvertrag*, was bereft of this caveat, thus facilitating 'die aktive Grundsteinlegung zum Aufbau einer nationalen Identität, die mit der historischen Realität und der kollektiven

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Dagmar Lorenz, 'Austrian Authors and the Dilemma of National and Regional Identity at the End of the Twentieth Century', *Modern Austrian Literature*, 29 (1996), 13-29, p. 15.

⁵¹ Klaus Zeyringer, *Österreichische Literatur seit 1945*, p. 49.

Erfahrung des überwiegenden Teils der österreichischen Bevölkerung nur sehr partiell übereinstimmte'.⁵² The construction of Austria's national identity proceeded, as Ingeborg Rabenstein-Michel suggests, on the basis of a dualistic 'Anknüpfungs- und Abgrenzungsstrategie: Anknüpfung an ein "wahres Österreich", das historisch undeutlich, aber auf jeden Fall irgendwo vor 1938 eingesetzt wurde, Abgrenzung zu Deutschland (und seiner erwiesenen Schuld) in dem noch sehr fragilen neuen Österreich'.⁵³ Both aspects of this carefully-crafted nation-building strategy were served by the promotion of the so-called *Österreich-Ideologie*. By emphasizing Austria's former greatness as the cultural and political hub of the Habsburg Empire, the Second Republic was able to underplay its linguistic and cultural connection to its now-compromised German neighbour, while at the same time exploiting a potent source of national pride. The emphasis on Habsburg continuities brought with it a further convenient side-effect, bolstering the Second Republic's understanding of the years between 1938 and 1945 as a period of foreign rule during which the Austrian nation had not existed as an independent, self-governing entity.⁵⁴ The strategy of continuity was summarized succinctly by Alexander Lernet-Holnia, who proclaimed 'In der Tat brauchen wir nur dort fortsetzen, wo uns die Träume eines Irren unterbrochen haben. In der Tat brauchen wir nicht nach vorne, sondern zurückzublicken [...] wir sind im besten und wertvollsten Verstande unserer Vergangenheit'.⁵⁵

During the immediate post-war years, this principle of continuity came to structure all areas of Austria's social and political life. In the literary sphere, it was manifest in an insistence on the 'uncompromised continuity of non-émigré Austrian literature',⁵⁶ which legitimated attempts to rehabilitate

⁵² Ibid. Zeyringer quotes here from Walter Manoschek, 'Verschmähte Erbschaft. Österreichs Umgang mit dem Nationalsozialismus 1945 bis 1955', in *Österreich 1945-1995: Gesellschaft—Politik—Kultur*, ed. by Reinhard Sieder, Heinz Steinert, Emmerich Tálos (Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1995), pp. 94-106 (p. 96).

⁵³ Rabenstein-Michel, 'Bewältigungsinstrument', para. 5.

⁵⁴ A particularly brash formulation of this position can be found in Ernst Josef Görlich and Felix Romanik, *Geschichte Österreichs* (Innsbruck: Zöllner, 1970), p. 551, which states: 'The Second World War belongs to world history, but not to Austrian history. It was not an Austrian War. Austria did not participate in it'.

⁵⁵ Alexander Lernet-Holnia, *Der Turm*, 1 (1945), p. 109.

⁵⁶ Joseph McVeigh, "Das bin nur ich. Wenn ich es bin": Politics and Literature in Austria after 1945', *The German Quarterly*, 61(1988), 5-21 (p. 9).

Heimatliteratur in order to bolster a much-needed sense of Austrian patriotism that was distinct from the pan-German ideal. The rehabilitation during the 1950s of works by Waggerl and his contemporaries, including Pekornig and Mell, however, endowed the concept of 'continuity' in post-war Austrian literature with an additional set of highly dubious connotations. The reading public during the late 1940s and 1950s was confronted with a bizarre situation whereby

[...] those authors who a few years earlier appeared in anthologies and other publications of the National Socialist cultural apparatus were heralded in literary histories, school readers and anthologies of the post-war era as representatives of a uniquely Austrian culture.⁵⁷

By reversing so conspicuously the generic constants of the *Heimatroman*, therefore, the *Anti-Heimatroman* not only mounted a protest against the 'mythologisierende Verhunjung von Heimat, Landschaft und Natur' committed in the *Heimatroman*,⁵⁸ but also turned back on itself the very discourse that legitimated the genre's rehabilitation. In doing so, it cast into doubt the validity of the particular concept of national identity that the discourse of continuity underpinned.

As Rabenstein-Michel suggests, however, the socially-critical capacity of the *Anti-Heimatroman* did not manifest itself solely in its negativization of the generic norms that were constitutive of the *Heimatroman*. At the level of content, it was also able to engage explicitly with two strategies that were intended to reinforce the all-pervasive discourse of continuity. She notes:

[d]ie Anti-Heimatliteratur der ersten Nachkriegsjahrzehnte [reagiert] auf zwei der fragwürdigsten österreichischen Nachkriegsstrategien: die Tabuisierung der störenden Vergangenheit und die global undistanzierte Übernahme eines nicht nur überholten, sondern historisch ausgiebigst missbrauchten Heimatbegriffs und dessen fragwürdige Neuinszenierung durch die Regierung des 'neuen Österreich' nach 1945 bzw. 1955 [...] in Form des gerne herangezogenen Klischees der unschuldigen Natur.⁵⁹

The dynamics of the first 'fragwürdige Strategie' that Rabenstein-Michel identifies here are, on the face of it at least, fairly clear. The official injunction to suppress Austria's experience during the Second World War was paramount in ensuring that the nation was able to sidestep culpability for its involvement in

⁵⁷ McVeigh, "Das bin nur ich.", p. 9.

⁵⁸ Michael Scharang, 'Landschaft und Literatur', *Kürbiskern*, 3 (1975), 98-101, p. 101.

⁵⁹ Rabenstein-Michel, 'Bewältigungsinstrument', para. 2.

Nazi war-crimes. But Rabenstein-Michel's observations on this point tell only one side of a rather more complex story: As Heidemarie Uhl has shown, the official discourse of Austrian victimhood was complicated toward the end of the 1940s by a pronounced 'shift in commemorative culture'.⁶⁰ While the victim narrative remained intact, Austria's staunch denial of its participation in the Second World War began to weaken, as war memorials sprang up that were intended to honour "soldiers who protected our fatherland in battle" and who were prepared "to fulfil their duty by risking their own lives".⁶¹ This shift gave rise to a policy of 'double-speak', whereby

[i]n international politics, Austria emphasized its role as Hitler's first victim, and [...] as anti-Nazi state, whereas at the national level, the memories of the resistance and the Nazi crimes were marginalized. While the Austrian negotiators in the negotiations for the State Treaty insisted on the deletion of the 'share of responsibility clause', Austrian politicians were paying public tribute to former *Wehrmacht* soldiers, praising them for so conscientiously fulfilling their duties and willingness to make sacrifices for their homeland. Yet, as soon as Austria's share in the responsibility for Nazi crimes was queried, all charges were rejected, and justified by Austria's legally acknowledged status as Hitler's first victim [...].⁶²

Even taking into account the more nuanced account of Austrian memory politics that Uhl provides, a number of critics corroborate Rabenstein-Michel's suggestion that 'die Anti-Heimatliteratur macht sich zur Aufgabe, die ausgeblendete Vergangenheit in der Kunst wieder aufleben zu lassen'.⁶³ Quite apart from the contention that the *Anti-Heimattromane* that emerged during the 1960s contributed significantly to a nascent literary *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, a number of analyses exist that read novels such as Hans Lebert's *Die Wolfshaut* and Gerhard Fritsch's *Fasching* as critical engagements with the dubious mechanics of the Second Republic's officially-sanctioned memory politics.⁶⁴ J.J. Long's article, 'Casual Brutalities', is a case in point. Exploring how the novels dramatize the 'double-speak' that Uhl sees as central to the commemorative culture of post-war Austria, Long contends that

⁶⁰ Heidemarie Uhl, 'The Politics of Memory: Austria's Perception of the Second World War and the National Socialist Period', in *Austrian Historical Memory & National Identity*, ed. by Günter Bischof and Anton Pelinka (New Brunswick, NJ; London: Transaction, 1997), pp. 64-94 (p. 74).

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 75.

⁶² Ibid., p. 80.

⁶³ Rabenstein-Michel, 'Bewältigungsinstrument', para 7.

⁶⁴ Gerhard Fritsch, *Fasching* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1964).

both *Die Wolfshaut* and Gerhard Fritsch's *Fasching* 'suggest that National Socialist views can persist in the Second Republic as long as they remain absent from public discourse, hence the rural population can privately espouse Nazi ideology while paying lip-service to democratic principles'.⁶⁵

The second strategy that Rabenstein-Michel picks out, namely the instrumentalization of *Heimat* 'in Form des [...] Klischees der unschuldigen Natur', meanwhile, does not necessarily follow from the account of Austrian identity politics provided above. Yet given their potential significance in terms of illustrating the socially-critical resonance of the *Anti-Heimatroman*, it is worth returning briefly to her comments in order to flesh out her initial gloss. In support of her contention that the post-war years saw the transformation of the Austrian *Heimat* 'zur überwältigenden, unschuldigen und identitätsstiftenden Naturkulisse [...], die vorteilhaft die historischen Fehlentscheidungen der Menschen verbarg',⁶⁶ Rabenstein-Michel alludes to the photographs displayed at state-sponsored exhibitions 'bis weit in die siebziger Jahre', which portrayed 'hauptsächlich Landschaft und Natur, höchst selten jedoch Menschen [...], um die (Mit)schuldfrage nach Möglichkeit zu umgehen'.⁶⁷ The connection that she perceives between the stylized images of nature and a collective attempt to circumvent the question of guilt is corroborated by Klaus Zeyringer, who points up the role that Austria's landscape played in the 'Fassade' constructed during the immediate post-war years, which was intended 'die Blicke auf sich [...] zu lenken, von der jüngsten Vergangenheit abzulenken':

[d]ie schönen Naturbilder dienten einer Bindung an das zu schaffende, zu stärkende National- und Heimatgefühl. [...] Sie gaben einer Natur die—den verbreiteten Abbildern nach zu schließen—scheinbar intakt geblieben war, eine restaurative und eine produktive Rolle, präsentierten sie als schöne Folie einer Kultur-Landschaft. Die 1946 getextete Bundeshymne, die Stereotypen in der Presse, auf Plakaten, in Filmen und Fotobänden prägten eine idyllisierte Berg-, Wald- und Wiesenkulisse zu einer Ikone Österreich mit hohem symbolischen Wert.⁶⁸

Rabenstein-Michel's observations, and their corroboration by critics such as Zeyringer and Long, lend credence to Robert Menasse's suggestion that

⁶⁵ J.J. Long, 'Casual Brutalities: Hans Lebert's *Die Wolfshaut*, Gerhard Fritsch's *Fasching* and Austrian Collective Memory, *Austrian Studies*, 11 (2003), 85-101 (p. 87).

⁶⁶ Rabenstein-Michel, 'Bewältigungsinstrument', para. 5.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Zeyringer, *Österreichische Literatur seit 1945*, p. 201.

the social criticism that is visible in the *Anti-Heimatroman* is directed beyond the borders of the provincial setting. By re-signifying the symbolic economy of the *Heimatroman*, Austrian writers hollowed out a number of the key discourses that contributed to Austria's self-understanding during the post-war years. The *Anti-Heimatromane* of the 1960s in particular engaged critically with Austria's status as first victim, while the genre's tendency to represent nature as 'menschenfeindlich' and the rural environment as an 'unheile Welt' can be seen as a critical reaction to the Second Republic's instrumentalization of the Austrian landscape in an effort to direct attention away from the immediate past. The aspect of post-war Austrian identity politics that received the most thoroughgoing and enduring critical treatment in the *Anti-Heimatroman*, however, was the discourse of continuity. As we shall see, it manifested itself in inverse form in the *Anti-Heimatromane* that were published during the 1970s and 1980s. In order to gain an insight into the ways in which the *Anti-Heimatroman* developed during these decades, we need to examine briefly the overview of the trend's evolution that Robert Menasse provides.

Menasse contends that the critical gaze of the *Anti-Heimatroman* extends far beyond the socio-political conditions that inspired its emergence. He identifies three phases in its development, which each span a period of roughly ten years. As we have already seen, early examples of the *Anti-Heimatroman*, such as Hans Lebert's *Die Wolfshaut* and Gerhard Fritsch's *Fasching*, thematize the complicity of provincial communities in war crimes committed in the name of National Socialism, pointing up the persistent prevalence of the fascist mentality during the period immediately after the Second World War. Menasse contends that this mode of *Anti-Heimat* writing was superseded in the 1970s by depictions of regional Austria that no longer referred directly to the nation's problematic relationship with National Socialist Germany, but depicted life in the provinces 'durchaus so, daß die strukturelle Kontinuität im beschriebenen Alltag deutlich wird'.⁶⁹ Finally, during the 1980s, authors including Norbert Gstrein turned their attention to the devastating effects of tourism in the Alpine

⁶⁹ Menasse, *Das war Österreich*, p. 102.

provinces, 'noch mit Verweisen auf die mentalen Kontinuitäten aus der Nazi-Zeit'.⁷⁰

Menasse's comments on the *Anti-Heimatromane* of the 1970s are corroborated to a certain extent by Klaus Zeyringer. Zeyringer notes that novels published by Franz Innerhofer, Josef Winkler and Peter Handke defined by many contemporary critics as landmark *Anti-Heimatromane* were initially inserted into the tradition of so-called 'neuer Subjektivismus'. The 'Reise ins eigene Ich' that provided the material for such novels as *Schöne Tage*, *Wünschloses Unglück* and *Menschenkind* caused critics to overlook the 'gesellschaftliche und politische Charakter' of the 'so genannte[r] österreichische[r] Anti-Heimatroman'.⁷¹ In these novels, Zeyringer suggests,

[w]urde ein Bild der Hoffnungs- und Ausweglosigkeit des Landlebens gegen die Heimat-Idyllik gestellt, wurde vermittelt, daß und wie ein Individuum in Regeln und Normen der konservativ-autoritären ländlichen Gesellschaft gefangen ist.⁷²

Alongside their attempt to point up the stultifying and hopeless conditions of life in the Austrian provinces, Zeyringer ascribes a second goal to the *Anti-Heimatromane* of the 1970s. Zeyringer suggests that Austrian writers during this period appropriated the literary text as a means 'sich erzählend dem Gewicht einer drückenden Erziehung der Unterdrückung zu entledigen'.⁷³ Zeyringer notes that 'Handke, Innerhofer, Winkler, Wolfgruber u.a. [...] waren zum Teil noch in der NS-Zeit geboren und/oder von Eltern erzogen worden, die noch völlig dem im Dritten Reich und auch schon früher propagierten Erziehungsideal verhaftet waren (das in Österreich noch heute weit verbreitet ist)'.⁷⁴ It is in this critical engagement with the emotional, physical and psychological consequences of so-called 'Schwarze Pädagogik' that Zeyringer locates the broader socially-critical resonance of the 1970s *Anti-Heimatromane*.

Wenn nun Autoren [...] entsprechende Strukturen beschreiben und sichtbar machen, dann hat auch dieser sog. 'Neuer Subjektivismus' gesellschaftlich eine große Bedeutung. Es ging also bei vielen Autoren und Autorinnen in den siebziger Jahre weniger um die 'Wonnen des Ich-Sagens' als vielmehr um

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Zeyringer, *Innerlichkeit*, p. 91.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 92.

Erkennen und Beschreibung der Unterdrückung, von der Kindheit bis ins Erwachsenenalter.⁷⁵

The foregoing comments suggest that Menasse's characterization of the *Anti-Heimatroman* as *Nationalliteratur* also rings true for the particular iteration of the trend that was prevalent during the 1970s. But as I have already suggested, perhaps the most problematic aspect of the tripartite schema that Menasse presents is his suggestion that the *Anti-Heimatroman* lingered, albeit in a different form, during the 1980s. While the remaining sections of his schematization find at least some resonance in other critical responses to the genre, the absence of the *Anti-Heimatroman* after 1980 is perhaps the only characteristic of the trend that can be construed as a matter of consensus. In a statement that finds resonance in the work of such critics as Dagmar Lorenz and Klaus Zeyringer, Jürgen Koppensteiner, writing in 1982, maintains that the *Anti-Heimatroman* 'vom Thema her sich totgelaufen [hat]'.⁷⁶

Given its lack of corroboration in the critical literature that engages with the *Anti-Heimatroman*, this thesis cannot afford to take at face value Menasse's contention that the trend persisted beyond the end of the 1980s. Yet the continuum that Menasse sets up provides the basis for the claim, to be pursued in the course of this thesis, that the urban turn in fact represents the terminal stage in the development of the *Anti-Heimatroman*. As a result, the first chapter, a reading of Norbert Gstrein's *Das Register*, will test the validity of Menasse's claims by examining the extent to which the novel draws on the conventions of the *Anti-Heimatroman*. Turning my attention subsequently to novels that are set in Vienna, I extrapolate two specific phases in the evolution of literature's engagement with the realities of present-day and historical Austria. My readings of Lilian Faschinger's *Wiener Passion* (1999) and Doron Rabinovici's *Suche nach M* (1997) show that during the 1990s, the city replaces the province as a privileged backdrop for critical engagement with the key discourses that structure post-war identity politics. By contrast, the post-*Jahrtausendwende* texts discussed here, namely Arno Geiger's *Es geht uns gut* (2005) and Thomas Stangl's *Ihre Musik* (2006), are marked by a turn inward, as authors become

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Jürgen Koppensteiner, 'Anti-Heimatliteratur in Österreich. Zur literarischen Heimatwelle der siebziger Jahre', *Modern Austrian Literature*, 15 (1982), 1-11 (p. 8).

more interested in the emotional, psychological and existential orientation of the individual subject. But this turn inward results ultimately in a shift outward, enabling Austrian writers to focus on more universal socio-political issues. The journey from 'Staat' to 'Subjekt', therefore, leads in many different directions: through the seminal moments of Austrian history; through a plethora of geographical locations ranging from Vienna to Bohemia, New York and Palestine. But most importantly, it leads simultaneously inward, outward, and nowhere at all. The texts discussed in this thesis each evince an interest in the individual subject, whose increase over time allows the resonance of Austrian writing progressively to transcend the borders of province, metropolis and nation, while the novels themselves remain rooted in the social, cultural and political context of historical and present-day Austria.

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The arguments outlined above are likely to raise a series of interrelated questions of a methodological nature, pertaining to the following points: which novels are selected for analysis; their status as representative of the urban turn; and their cohesiveness as a group of texts. There are, for example, many novels that could have been chosen to illustrate the dynamics of the urban turn, and its roots can arguably be traced back a good deal further than the 1990s. Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, for instance, locates them in Thomas Bernhard's late novel *Alte Meister*,⁷⁷ and they are equally perceptible in *Holzfällen*, published a year earlier.⁷⁸ Another obvious starting point might be the early work of Elfriede Jelinek, whose radically critical novels *Die Klavierspielerin* and *Die Ausgesperrten* are both set in Vienna.⁷⁹ But there are equally compelling grounds for contesting these assumed continuities. Critical opinion suggests two reasons why Bernhard's later prose-work does not participate fully in the urban turn. First, critics have noted the scarcity of sustained engagement with

⁷⁷ Thomas Bernhard, *Alte Meister* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1985).

⁷⁸ Thomas Bernhard, *Holzfällen* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1984).

⁷⁹ Elfriede Jelinek, *Die Ausgesperrten* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1980) and *Die Klavierspielerin* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1983).

Vienna's topography, even in those novels that are set in the city. J.J. Long observes that Bernhard's prose-works contain

[...] virtually no representation of the urban environment [...]. While several of them do have a specifically Viennese setting, the city is reduced to a limited number of internal spaces: Irina's Blumenstockgassewohnung [...] and a series of cafés in *Wittgensteins Neffe*, the Auersbergers' flat in *Holzfällen*, the Kunsthistorisches Museum [...] in *Alte Meister*.⁸⁰

The relatively marginal role that Vienna plays in Bernhard's fiction feeds into a broader debate surrounding the function of topography in his literary works at large. Although recent work on Bernhard has sought to reassess the dynamics and status of literary space in his novels,⁸¹ many scholars have questioned Bernhard's status as a realist author, thereby concluding that the specifics of space and setting in his novels are largely irrelevant. Critics have argued variously that the Austrian settings in Bernhard's novels function symbolically as ciphers for 'soziale und existentielle Gegebenheiten',⁸² or should be read as 'symbolisch begrenzte Räume' that allude to the condition of isolation, and are therefore readily interchangeable.⁸³ Charles W. Martin argues that the only exceptions to this rule are Bernhard's autobiographical texts, where references to Austrian topography are 'set against their historical, sociological, and psychological background'.⁸⁴

In Jelinek's case, meanwhile, the novels alluded to above are very much the exception rather than the rule: Jelinek, it would seem, has ploughed a characteristically lonely furrow, following an inverse trajectory that leads away from the metropolis into the provinces. While neglecting to include either *Die Ausgesperrten* or *Die Klavierspielerin* in his own list of the novels that have contributed to the contemporary 'Wien Boom',⁸⁵ Schmidt-Dengler describes

⁸⁰ J.J. Long, 'Ungleichzeitigkeiten. Class Relationships in Bernhard's Fiction', in *A Companion to the Works of Thomas Bernhard*, ed. by Matthias Konzett (New York: Camden House, 2002), pp. 187-208 (p. 188). Long notes that the one exception to this rule occurs in Bernhard's first novel, *Frost*, which is widely regarded as a paradigmatic example of the *Anti-Heimatroman*.

⁸¹ Cf. for example, Katja Krylova, "'Eine den Menschen zerzausende Landschaft': Psychotopography and the Alpine landscape in Thomas Bernhard's *Frost*", *Austrian Studies*, 18 (2011), 74-88.

⁸² Hans Höller, *Kritik einer literarischen Form: Versuch über Thomas Bernhard* (Stuttgart: Akademischer Verlag Heinz, 1979), p. 121.

⁸³ Charles W. Martin, *The nihilism of Thomas Bernhard: the portrayal of existential and social problems in his prose-works* (Amsterdam; Atlanta: Rudopi, 1995), p. 14.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁸⁵ Schmidt-Dengler, 'Provinziell, urban global', p. 11.

Jelinek's *Kinder der Toten*, published in 1995, as the apotheosis of the *Anti-Heimatroman*.⁸⁶ Its conventions have also been observed in most of Jelinek's other prose-works, including *Die Liebhaberinnen*,⁸⁷ *Oh Wildnis, oh Schutz vor ihr*,⁸⁸ and *Gier*.⁸⁹ While Jelinek's particular brand of *Wien-Roman* may therefore have influenced the trajectory and dynamics of the urban turn to a certain degree, the extent to which it functioned as its catalyst is questionable. But Schmidt-Dengler's description of *die Kinder der Toten* as the *Anti-Heimatroman par excellence* raises a further possible objection to the particular trajectory that I have identified, because the novel offers an alternative 'end-point' in the history of the *Anti-Heimatroman*. Yet critical opinion suggests that Jelinek's novel is more indicative of regression than progression. Its brutal emphasis on Austria's continued failure to deal adequately with its role in the Second World War and the Holocaust, and its primary concern with the mechanics of remembering and repression, replicate the fundamental thematic concerns of the original *Anti-Heimatroman*, Hans Lebert's *Die Wolfshaut*, which functions for Jelinek as 'empatische[r] Bezugspunkt ihres Schreibens'.⁹⁰

A second reservation that might potentially emerge concerns the presumed function of the texts that I have selected for discussion. It may be objected in particular that I am asking my corpus to work too hard: five novels, after all, do not a trend make. But the texts chosen for discussion here are each representative in their own right of particular tendencies in contemporary Austrian writing. Norbert Gstrein's early works, including *Das Register*, are commonly perceived as key examples of so-called *Fremdenverkehrsliteratur*, the trend that Robert Menasse has identified as the final incarnation of the *Anti-Heimatroman*. Doron Rabinovici's *Suche nach M.* is among the novels that contributed to the 'Renaissance des jüdischen Romans' in Austrian literature in

⁸⁶ Ibid., p.10.

⁸⁷ Cf. Allyson Fiddler, 'Demythologizing the Austrian 'Heimat': Elfriede Jelinek as "Nestbeschmutzer"', in *From High Priests to Desecrators*, ed. by Schmidt and McGowan, pp. 25-44 (p. 27).

⁸⁸ Cf. Zeyringer, *Innerlichkeit und Öffentlichkeit*, p. 238.

⁸⁹ Cf. Andreas Breitenstein, 'Der Zauber der Meduse /"Gier": Elfriede Jelinek übt sich in rasendem Kunsthandwerk', *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 17 October 2002.

⁹⁰ Klaus Kastberger, 'Österreichische Endspiele: Die Toten kehren zurück', *TRANS: Internetzeitschrift Kulturwissenschaften*, 15 (2003) <http://www.inst.at/trans/15Nr/05_16/kastberger15.htm> [accessed 12 July 2011].

the wake of the Waldheim Affair.⁹¹ Lilian Faschinger, meanwhile, is frequently placed alongside other women writers such as Waltraud Anne Mitgutsch and Elisabeth Reichart in a tradition of feminist criticism that traces its roots back to Ingeborg Bachmann.⁹² Arno Geiger's *Es geht uns gut* stands at the intersection of two contemporary trends. Together with Eva Menasse's *Vienna*, which was published in the same year, it was held up as incontrovertible proof of 'die neue Lust am Familienroman' among Germanophone authors;⁹³ it is also one of a series of novels by contemporary Austrian writers, including Robert Menasse, Xaver Bayer and Thomas Glaivinic, that occupy themselves with the contemporary 'crisis of masculinity'. The only work included here that apparently evades categorization is Thomas Stangl's *Ihre Musik*. But it is precisely this apparent resistance to classification that makes the novel worthy of comment.

WRITING THE WRITTEN CITY.

Given Vienna's prolonged absence from the contemporary Austrian novel, it is unsurprising to note the scarcity of scholarly work that engages with the city's representation in contemporary Austrian literature. As yet, no study exists that takes the city's representation in literature as its sole focus. Yet the field is not entirely uninhabited. One collection of comparative essays exists that explores links and disparities in the dynamics of literature's relationship with Vienna at both *fin de siècle*. *Literature in Vienna at the Turn of the Centuries* seeks 'to show how the aesthetics of literature and its historical background have influenced each other and how they have changed during a century'.⁹⁴ As this gloss suggests, the volume's remit is broad, a characteristic that is reflected in

⁹¹ Günther Scheidl, 'Renaissance des "jüdischen" Romans nach 1986', in *Judentum und Antisemitismus: Studien zur Literatur und Germanistik in Österreich*, ed. by Anne Betten and Konstanze Fliedl (Berlin: Schmidt, 2003), pp. 132-148.

⁹² Cf. for example, Allyson Fiddler, 'Postwar Austrian Women Writers', in *Post-war women's writing in German: feminist critical approaches*, ed. by Chris Weedon (Oxford: Berghahn, 1997), pp. 243-68. See also J.J. Long, 'Austrian Prose Fiction', pp. 237-41.

⁹³ Volker von Hage, 'Wühlarbeit im Haus der Ahnen', *Der Spiegel*, 29 May 2005.

⁹⁴ Ernst Grabovszki, 'Introduction: Notes on Literature in Vienna at the Turn of the Centuries', in *Literature in Vienna at the Turn of the Centuries: Continuities and Discontinuities around 1900 and 2000* ed. by Ernst Grabovszki and James Hardin (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2003), pp. 1-27 (p. 1).

the range of essays that it encompasses. The ten contributions take in topics as wide-ranging as art, cinema, intellectual culture, poetry and psychoanalysis. But only one of them, Janet Stewart's 'The Written City: Literary Representations of Vienna at the Turn of the Centuries', engages explicitly with the question of Vienna's representation in literature. In her comparison of the work of Peter Altenberg and Peter Rosei, she argues that 'it is the figure of the *flâneur* that offers Viennese authors [...] a means of writing the city',⁹⁵ and explores how both authors '[sort] their constellations of images, scenes, conversations and experiences taken from everyday life and [place] them in new literary constellations'.⁹⁶ Stewart's essay concludes with a brief reference to the ways in which key modernist theorists of urban space continue to influence contemporary writers. She notes that 'Rosei is bringing to his novels not only his subjective experience of the city, but also his reading of the already written city—which includes the writings of Baudelaire, Altenberg, Simmel, Benjamin and Kracauer, as well as a multitude of other literary, theoretical and practical documents'.⁹⁷

In the context of the volume as a whole, Stewart's thoroughgoing engagement with questions of representation proves very much the exception rather than the rule: in the remainder of the essays, the city itself merely provides the backdrop for an examination of the dialogue between literature and a particular sphere of Viennese culture, and indeed Austrian culture at large. As one reviewer notes, the volume's focus on literature's role in these broader socio-cultural contexts suggests that it is best read either as a continuation of, or an *homage* to, Carl Schorske's landmark study, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture*.⁹⁸

Despite the apparent dearth of work that deals exclusively with the literary representation of contemporary Vienna, the subject occupies a position

⁹⁵ Janet Stewart, 'The Written City: Vienna 1900 and 2000', in *Literature in Vienna at the Turn of the Centuries*, ed. by Grabovszki and Hardin, pp. 27-51 (p. 30).

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁹⁸ Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Knopf, 1961). It is worth noting that the culture of *fin de siècle* Vienna continues to garner a great deal of attention. Cf. for example, Steve Beller (ed.), *Rethinking Vienna 1900* (Oxford; New York: Berghahn, 2001); Tag Gronberg, *Vienna: city of modernity; 1890-1914* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2007).

of varying significance in critical accounts of a specific literary trend, namely the reinvigorated tradition of Viennese-Jewish writing, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three. At this point, it suffices to note that critics credit the so-called 'Renaissance des "jüdischen" Romans' with the rehabilitation of *Großstadtliteratur* in a specifically Austrian context.⁹⁹ In the second chapter of his monograph, *'86 und die Folgen*, Matthias Beilein sets out to read works by Robert Schindel, Robert Menasse and Doron Rabinovici 'vor allem als Texte einer Großstadtliteratur'.¹⁰⁰ Beilein contends that the integration into their novels of authentic Viennese locations is an essential element of a 'faktuale Schreibstrategie' common to the work of all three authors. In particular, Beilein seeks to answer the following questions:

Welche Rolle spielt die Topographie der Metropole für die Literatur und wie gelingt es der Literatur, dabei die Stadt selbst zum Thema zu machen? Wie ist das Verhältnis der Autoren zu Wien als Ort der Literatur und wie erscheint Wien als literarischer Ort in der Literatur? Wo liegen die Gründe der topographischen Fixierung auf Wien, und wie manifestiert sie sich literarisch?¹⁰¹

Beilein's intentions as outlined above signal the pre-eminent position that Vienna's broader function as 'Ort der Literatur' occupies in his study. Accordingly, his exploration of 'wirkliches und literarisches Wien' opens with a lengthy excursion on the position that the *Kaffeehaus* occupies in Vienna's literary scene, which focuses particularly on the reasons behind Austrian writers' longstanding connection with the institution, and the nature of his three writers' relationships with it. Drawing on the work of Volker Klotz, he then examines the 'gemeinschaftsbildende Rolle der transitorischen Orte in der Literatur'.¹⁰² Beilein shows that these 'Orte des Vorübergehens [...]',¹⁰³ which include bars, coffeehouses and markets, fulfil a variety of functions in the fictional works of his three writers: First, they are the 'einzigen urbanen Teil[e]

⁹⁹ Cf. Günther Scheidl, 'Renaissance des "jüdischen" Romans nach 1986', in *Judentum und Antisemitismus: Studien zur Literatur und Germanistik in Österreich*, ed. by Anne Betten and Konstanze Fliedl (Berlin: Schmidt, 2003), pp. 132-48.

¹⁰⁰ Matthias Beilein, *86 und die Folgen: Robert Schindel, Robert Menasse und Doron Rabinovici im literarischen Feld Österreich* (Berlin: Schmidt, 2008), p. 134.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 141.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 140.

des nicht urbanen Wiens',¹⁰⁴ providing open spaces of cosmopolitan diversity in a city whose otherwise homogenized, conservative culture is unable to accommodate difference. Second, they influence interpersonal relationships by breaking down established social hierarchies; third, they provide the pre-eminent backdrop for encounters with collective 'Freundeskreise' and 'des Kennenlernens anderer';¹⁰⁵ finally, they function as microcosms in which the social relationships that dominate in the city are reproduced in miniature.

Beilein's observations are enlightening, but brief, thereby failing, perhaps, to do justice to the complex and multifaceted role that Vienna's urban topography plays in the literary projects that he discusses. In particular, his emphasis on the Austrian capital's 'transitorische Orte' means that he is unable to explore comprehensively the pivotal role that Vienna's narrated topography plays in the explorations and negotiations of individual and collective identity that are played out in works by Schindel, Rabinovici and Menasse. Although Beilein discusses the problem of identity at length in the final chapter of his monograph, references to Vienna as setting do not recur in this context. Beilein's recourse to a single theoretical framework to analyse the visions of Vienna that his three authors create might also be said to repress the different approaches that each adopts to the representation of the city. Yet Beilein's suggestion that the examples of Austrian-Jewish writing that he discusses are to be understood in the first place as instances of *Großstadtliteratur* certainly stands, so that the analysis of the urban turn to be pursued here would be incomplete without reference to this particular trend. By concentrating exclusively on *Suche nach M.*, however, I place Doron Rabinovici's work in a broader context than Beilein, positing the reinvigorated tradition of Jewish writing as one of several significant trends in which the urban turn is evident.

Because of the pronounced lack of critical analyses that deal with the question of Vienna's representation in contemporary literature, we need to look beyond Austrian Studies for scholarly work whose goals are comparable to those that this thesis sets out to achieve. The lack of interest in urban space in Austria can be contrasted usefully with the astonishing wealth of critical

¹⁰⁴ Beilein, p. 151.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 149.

material that deals with representations of Berlin in literature published after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Berlin's status as the focal point of the reunification process, and the seismic changes—infrastructural, political and socio-cultural—that this process brought with it, has generated enormous interest from writers and scholars alike. As a number of critics have noted, the fall of the Berlin wall was accompanied by widespread and persistent calls for the definitive *Berlinroman* that would capture the essence of both the changing city and the experience of German unification. As Katharina Gerstenberger observes, however, '[t]his novel never appeared. Instead, writers created a patchwork body of about three hundred texts about a city whose post-war identity was disintegrating virtually overnight'.¹⁰⁶ In the wake of this 'patchwork of novels' appeared an equally diverse—if not quite as extensive—range of critical analyses that interpreted them from a variety of angles. No overview of this vast field can hope to be exhaustive, and an attempt to provide a detailed synopsis of it falls outside the remit of this thesis. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify three interlinked concerns that recur—albeit in a variety of constellations—in the critical responses to these 'new Berlin texts'. They tend to be examined for their potential contribution to debates surrounding the topics of memory, national identity, and generational difference, concerns that coalesce in Katharina Gerstenberger's *Writing the New Berlin* and Philip Broadbent's 'Generational Shifts: Representing Post-Wende Berlin'.¹⁰⁷ Gerstenberger notes that Germany's reunification precipitated a debate on the function of literature in German society which focussed on the question of whether 'literature should continue to function as the "conscience" of the nation'.¹⁰⁸ As she and Broadbent both show, this debate found expression in the new Berlin texts, where assessment of the relationship between literature and society fissured along generational lines. Broadbent differentiates between 'a generation of writers [exemplified by Günther Grass] for whom an obligation to remember the past is central to [their] literary production and 'a generation of post-reunification

¹⁰⁶ Katharina Gerstenberger, *Writing the New Berlin: The German Capital in Post-Wall Literature* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2008), p. 1.

¹⁰⁷ Philip Broadbent, 'Generational Shifts: Representing Post-Wende Berlin', *New German Critique*, 35 (2008), 139-169.

¹⁰⁸ Gerstenberger, *Berlin*, p. 2.

writers [...] for whom the city's [...] historically loaded pasts appear to be of limited concern'. Broadbent continues:

Their portrayals of the city underscore a thematic shift and deliberate break away from those more historically concerned Berlin representations. The literary focus of these writers is on the quotidian urban experiences of a wave of young people coming to Germany's new metropolis.¹⁰⁹

What Broadbent's observations point up is the fact that the city—both real and written—became a battleground during the 1990s, the site through which Germany's relationship with the past, and the extent to which literature should mediate this relationship, was re-negotiated. The battle in question was fought by members of a 'new generation' of German writers, whose novels simultaneously shaped and were shaped by a steadily-shifting attitude towards the city's multiple pasts. The relationship that Broadbent identifies here between the emergence of a new generation and a corresponding shift in literature's relationship with the nation on the one hand and with the city on the other resonates to a considerable degree with the complex of issues that provide the departure-point for this thesis. A key question in the post-*Jahrtausendwende* texts discussed here concerns how the emergence of younger constellations of Austrian writers has affected the literary representation of city and nation, and to what extent these representations are informed by a shift in attitude toward Austria's history. The extent to which the implications of Austria's 'generational shift' might approximate to the German experience is a question that might usefully be pursued in future scholarship.

THE SPATIAL TURN

In 1989, American urban-planning theorist Edward W. Soja published the first critical reckoning with a phenomenon that would later be labelled the 'spatial turn' in modern theory.¹¹⁰ Soja argued that historicism's privileged position as the principal epistemological filter through which theory attempted to make sense of the world was gradually being usurped by the emergence of plural

¹⁰⁹ Broadbent, 'Shifts', p. 141.

¹¹⁰ Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London; New York: Verso, 1989). Soja himself uses the epithet 'spatial turn' as the heading for one of the book's sub-chapters, but does not yet deploy it as a catch-all term for the phenomenon that he describes.

'postmodern geographies' that were grounded in a heightened 'sensitivity to the spatiality of social life'.¹¹¹ Taking as his departure point Michel Foucault's contention that '[t]he present epoch will perhaps above all be the epoch of space',¹¹² Soja argued for a 'far-reaching spatialization of the critical imagination', and a reassertion of the interpretative significance of space in the historically privileged confines of contemporary critical thought'. For Soja, the gradual erosion of historicism's hegemony within modern theory, and history's re-entwining [...] with the social production of space, with the construction and configuration of human geographies' offered 'possibilities for a simultaneously historical and geographical materialism' and 'a triple dialectic of space, time and social being'.¹¹³ The 'spatial turn' as Soja described it involved a fundamental reassessment of the significance of space in the social sphere. The work of Michel Foucault and Henri Lefebvre particularly demanded a far-reaching modification of the modernist definition of space, which characterized it as a dead, fixed, undialectical 'container' for historical teleology. In its place, both theorists demanded a recognition of space as 'a product of social transition, transformation and experience'.¹¹⁴

Today, just over twenty years after the publication of *Postmodern Geographies*, Soja's spatial turn has acquired a resonance that transcends the disciplinary boundaries of human geography: multiple spatial turns have been acknowledged in fields as diverse—and incongruous—as theology and organizational theory.¹¹⁵ But the concept has only recently begun to find footing in German literary criticism.¹¹⁶ Although scholarly analyses of literary space are by no means non-existent, Wolfgang Hallett and Birgit Neumann note that they

¹¹¹ Ibid., pp. 10-11.

¹¹² Michel Foucault, 'Of other Spaces', trans. by Jay Miskowiec, *diacritics*, 16 (1986), 22-27 (p. 22).

¹¹³ Soja, *Postmodern Geographies*, p. 11.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 80.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Sigurd Bergmann, 'Theology in its Spatial Turn: Space, Place and Built Environments Challenging and Changing the Images of God', *Religion Compass*, 1/3 (2007), pp. 353-379 and Jörg Sydow, 'Toward a Spatial Turn in Organization Science?—A long wait', in *Secons Discussion Forum* (University of Bonn, 2004) <http://www.wiwiss.fu-berlin.de/institute/management/sydow/media/pdf/Sydow-Towards_a_Spatial_Turn_in_Organization_Science.pdf>

¹¹⁶ Wolfgang Hallett and Birgit Neumann, 'Raum und Bewegung in der Literatur: zur Einführung', in *Raum und Bewegung in der Literatur: Die Literaturwissenschaften und der Spatial Turn*, ed. by Hallett and Neumann (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2009), pp. 11-32 (p. 19).

continue to be founded for the most part on the formalist approach of such thinkers as Jurij Lotman, Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope, and the 'topoanalytical' approach inherited from the phenomenology of Gaston Bachelard. Writing in 2009, therefore, Hallet and Neumann can thus still speak 'trotz (eher vereinzelter) Anschlüsse an raumwissenschaftliche Konzepte' of an 'anhaltenden Marginalisierung räumlicher Kategorien in der Literaturwissenschaft gegenüber temporalisierenden Analyseformen'.¹¹⁷

A brief glance at the responses to the spatial turn suggests two plausible reasons for the scarcity of German-language studies that approach literary space according to the terms that Hallett and Neumann lay out. First, the concept of the spatial turn first penetrated the *Kulturwissenschaften* at large relatively recently. Jörg Döring and Tristan Thielmann note that the publication in 2003 of the book *Im Raume lesen wir die Zeit* by the controversial historian of Eastern Europe, Karl Schlögel, 'hat innerhalb wie auch jenseits der Geschichtswissenschaft die Frage nach einem *spatial turn* regelrecht popularisiert'.¹¹⁸ Döring and Thielmann also suggest that Schlögel's work endowed the approaches of Anglophone cultural geographers such as Soja, David Harvey and Derek Gregory with a resonance that extended beyond the disciplinary sphere in which they originated.¹¹⁹ Second, the persistence of interpretations that deal with the category of space from within a structuralist paradigm may be seen as symptomatic of the particular contours that the spatial turn acquired in European cultural theory. Writing in 2002, Sigrid Weigel proclaimed the emergence of a 'topographical turn' in the *Kulturwissenschaften* whose characteristics were distinct from its Angloamerican counterpart. She contends:

In der europäischen Theoriebildung beschreibt der 'topopgraphical turn' eine andere Konstellation als in den Cultural Studies [...] die Betonung der topographischen Wende [...] [liegt] auf 'graphisch'.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Jörg Döring and Tristan Thielmann, 'Einleitung: Was lesen wir im Raume? Der *Spatial Turn* und das geheime Wissen der Geographen', in *Spatial Turn: Das Raumparadigma in der Kultur- und Sozialwissenschaften* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2009), pp. 7-40 (p. 20).

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Sigrid Weigel, 'Zum topographical turn. Kartographie, Topographie und Raumkonzepte in den Kulturwissenschaften', *KulturPoetik*, 2 (2002), 151-165 (p. 160).

Weigel proceeds to argue for a conceptualization of the topographical turn in Europe that retains its links to the established 'culture as text' paradigm. She notes that:

Der Raum ist [...] nicht mehr Ursache oder Grund, von der oder dem die Ereignisse oder deren Erzählung ihren Ausgang nehmen, er wird selbst vielmehr als eine Art Text betrachtet, dessen Zeichen oder Spuren semiotisch, grammatologisch oder archäologisch zu entziffern sind.¹²¹

As Thielmann and Döring note, however, Weigel's conception of the topographical turn suggests that space can be analyzed only when 'er oder etwas an ihm sich in Text verwandelt hat (oder in etwas Textanaloges), das lesbar ist wie eine Sprache'.¹²² Hallet and Neumann note that Weigel is arguing here for a culturally-differentiated awareness of 'die kulturgeschichtlich wechselnden Repräsentationspraktiken, die den jeweils kulturell vorherrschenden Raumkonzepten zugrunde liegen'.¹²³ By focussing her attention exclusively on representational practices, however, Weigel's arguments seemingly divest space of its dynamism, refusing to allow it to stand in its own right as '[eine] kulturell [geprägte] und [produktive] Wahrnehmungskategorie, die zu anderen kulturellen Sinnstiftungsprozessen, Normen und Machtrelationen in Verbindung steht'.¹²⁴

Yet there are signs that the prevailing conception of space in the context of *Kulturwissenschaften*, and more specifically in the area of literary studies, is changing. Besides the slew of critical responses to the literary representation of Berlin that I allude to above, a number of essay collections now exist that bring 'kulturwissenschaftliche Raumtheorien' to bear on the literary representation of space. The latest such volume, entitled *Spatial Turns: Space Place and Mobility in German Literary and Visual Culture*, published at the end of 2010, brings together an impressive range of essays that '[arch] from more canonical areas of German Studies (like Goethe's work) to new media representations of German cities, (in google maps)', seeking thereby 'to trace space in its myriad inflections and across a history that is increasingly understood, mediated and configured

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Döring and Thielmann, 'Einleitung', p. 17.

¹²³ Hallet and Neumann, 'Raum und Bewegung', p. 12.

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 22.

spatially'.¹²⁵ The volume divides this extensive spatialized history into sections that explore the representation of urban space; the interconnection between literature and cartography; the racial and gendered dynamics of interaction with space; and finally the visual representation of space. Perhaps the most interesting element of the volume, however, is the markedly flexible approach that its editors and contributors take to the definition of the spatial turn. In a statement that decouples it consciously from its original Cultural Studies context, Jaimey Fisher and Barbara Mennel describe the spatial turn in extremely literal and broad-brush terms as 'the scholarly turn to space'. This apparently banal interpretation is important for two reasons. First, in combination with the inclusion in the volume of a section dedicated to the status of the map in German literature, it suggests that the concept of the 'spatial turn' has widened in order to take in precisely the kind of enquiry into the cultural contingency of representational practices that Weigel demanded. Second, this broad definition facilitates a certain flexibility with regard to the theorists whose work can be seen as having contributed to the spatial turn. Alongside its pioneers, Henri Lefebvre and Michel Foucault, Fisher and Mennel suggest that 'German theorists like Walter Benjamin and Siegfried Kracauer [...] offer some of [*sic.*] fertile ground for the turn that is recently bearing much scholarly fruit'.¹²⁶

At this juncture, it should be noted that the lack of critical material that deals with literary representations of Vienna in Austrian literature needs to be understood against the background of a broader disinterest in the category of space among critics working in the field. Neither *Spatial Turns* nor Hallet and Neumann's volume, *Raum und Bewegung in der Literatur*, contain references to Austrian novels, and scholarly work that thematizes explicitly the role of setting in Austrian writing is equally thin on the ground. Once more, however, there are faint signals that this situation is changing. The forthcoming edition of the journal *Austrian Studies* will focus on literary representations of the Alps; work is also being carried out on the role of psycho-topography in the work of

¹²⁵ Jaimey Fisher and Barbara Mennel, 'Introduction', in *Spatial Turns: Space, Place and Mobility in German Literary and Visual Culture*, ed. by Fisher and Mennel (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010), pp. 9-27, p. 23.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

Ingeborg Bachmann and Thomas Bernhard.¹²⁷ It is to this emergent field of spatial criticism that this thesis contributes.

THEORETICAL DIALOGUES

The investigation of urban space to be pursued here is informed by two intersecting critical frameworks. On the one hand, I acknowledge the roots of the spatial turn by drawing on Foucauldian and post-Foucauldian theory in my readings of Lilian Faschinger's *Wiener Passion* and Arno Geiger's *Es geht uns gut*. On the other, I acknowledge and agree with Fisher and Mennel's contention that the work of Walter Benjamin provides 'fertile ground' for the analysis of literary space. Benjamin's avowed scepticism about modernity's founding myth of historical progress, articulated perhaps most forcefully in the theses that comprise 'Über den Begriff der Geschichte',¹²⁸ and his wish to 'break apart' the historical continuum is certainly compatible with the pluralizing impulse that underpins Soja's postmodern geographies. As Mennel and Fisher suggest, however, the degree of Benjamin's resonance with the terms of Soja's postmodern project is rendered concrete in an apparently parenthetical observation made by Derek Gregory. Commenting on Benjamin's conception of the commodity as 'Dialektik im Stillstand', Gregory notes:

A concern with [...] the image character of truth became a vital moment in Benjamin's work [...] 'for [...] he sought to confer equal rank to the spatial aspect of truth and to thereby do justice to the moment of representation that is obscured once truth is viewed solely as a logical phenomenon'. In other words, Benjamin effectively 'spatialized' time, supplanting the narrative encoding of history through a textual practice that disrupted the historiographic chain in which moments were clipped together like magnets.¹²⁹

Benjamin's spatialization of time, and his concomitant ability to 'supplant the narrative encoding of history', articulate precisely with Soja's call for a spatialization of the critical imagination. Yet an exclusive focus on those aspects of Benjamin's *oeuvre* that resonate most obviously with the spatial turn's

¹²⁷ Cf. Katya Krylova, *Walking Through History: Topography and Identity in the Works of Ingeborg Bachmann and Thomas Bernhard* (Oxford: Peter Lang, forthcoming).

¹²⁸ Walter Benjamin, 'Über den Begriff der Geschichte', Walter Benjamin, 'Über den Begriff der Geschichte', in *Gesammelte Schriften*, 7 vols ed. by Ralf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1972-89), I: *Abhandlungen* (1974), pp. 690-708.

¹²⁹ Derek Gregory, 'Interventions in the Historical Geography of Modernity: Social Theory, Spatiality and the Politics of Representation', in *Place/ Culture/ Representation*, ed. by Duncan and Ley (London; New York: Routledge, 1993), pp. 272-313 (p. 287).

postmodern orientation risks underplaying the breadth and complexity of Benjamin's work on space, thereby underestimating the richness of its potential contribution to critical discourse on the subject. Of key importance in the context of this thesis are Benjamin's writings on the city, particularly those less well-known works that have been obscured by the monumental shadow of his *Passagenwerk*. As Graeme Gilloch notes in the introduction to his *Myth and Metropolis*, critical interest in Benjamin's work on the city is limited to a collection of oblique references in work that engages with other parts of his *oeuvre*. As a result, Gilloch maintains, 'there has been little attempt to explore [...] [Benjamin's] various city writings as a whole'.¹³⁰ Yet the scholarly work surrounding the plethora of new Berlin texts that I refer to above provides evidence that Benjamin's urban thought can provide an extremely productive foundation for examinations of the city and its representation in cultural production, as is exemplified by Andrew Webber's *Berlin in the Twentieth Century*.¹³¹ Benjamin's works on the city—particularly his essays on Baudelaire and his quasi-autobiographical writings on Berlin—provide the conceptual basis for the readings to be pursued here of Doron Rabinovici's *Suche nach M.* and Thomas Stangl's *Ihre Musik*.

The juxtaposition in this thesis of the work of Foucault and Benjamin may give rise to accusations of theoretical eclecticism; but this eclecticism is intentional. In accordance with the text-driven approach that this thesis adopts, the formal characteristics and thematic concerns of the novels to be discussed have provided the primary driver for the selection of the theoretical models to be deployed in the course of their interpretation. The selection of these two theorists has, however, influenced the focus of the analyses to be pursued here. The ways in which Benjamin and Foucault theorize urban space underline an incontestable characteristic of the city, namely its fundamental interrelationship with the body. Perhaps the most cogent formulation of the nature of this relationship is provided by Elizabeth Grosz, who proposes the fundamental interdependence of the body and the city, a circumstance that

¹³⁰ Graeme Gilloch, *Myth and Metropolis: Walter Benjamin and the City* (Cambridge: Polity, 1998), p. 4.

¹³¹ Andrew Webber, *Berlin in the Twentieth Century: A Cultural Topography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

dictates the dual focus of this thesis. Rather than providing a detailed account of Benjamin and Foucault's work at this juncture, I integrate discussion of the relevant theoretical approaches into each chapter.

This thesis, then, sets out to determine the ways in which the literary representation of Austrian realities has evolved as a result of Vienna's re-emergence as a dominant literary setting. As we have seen, the need for such an investigation is rendered all the more pressing in view of the provincial setting's traditional role as the backdrop against which Austrian writers have engaged critically with the discourses that structure post-war Austrian identity politics. I aim to determine the extent to which the socially-critical impulse at the core of the *Anti-Heimatroman* has survived, or been influenced by, the shift in focus from province to metropolis. This enquiry feeds into the broader question as to the status of literature and its relationship with the nation of which it is a product. The goals of the first chapter, which examines Norbert Gstrein's *Das Register* (1992), are two-fold.¹³² First, I use the novel as a test-case to establish the legitimacy of Menasse's contention that the *Anti-Heimatroman* persisted during the 1980s, and thereby lay the foundations for the literary genealogy that this thesis seeks to carry forward. Chapters Two and Three investigate the extent to which the socially-critical impulse at the core of the *Anti-Heimatroman* informs the representation of Austrian realities in Lilian Faschinger's *Wiener Passion* and Doron Rabinovici's *Suche nach M.*¹³³ After engaging with (post-) Foucauldian conceptualizations of the body and its relationship with urban space, my reading of *Wiener Passion* shows that Faschinger represents *fin-de-siècle* Vienna as a prototypical carceral city, in which the broader urban environment is structured by techniques of disciplinarity. I explore the ways in which these techniques shape and control the corporeality and subjectivity of the novel's main protagonist, Rosa Hawelka. I proceed to show that the narrative structure of *Wiener Passion* permits Faschinger to construct not just one representation of Vienna, but three. The passages of the novel that are focalized by Josef Horvath provide a satirical

¹³² Norbert Gstrein, *Das Register* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1992).

¹³³ Lilian Faschinger, *Wiener Passion* (Munich: dtv, 1999). Doron Rabinovici, *Suche nach M.: Roman in zwölf Episoden* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1997)

deconstruction of the disciplinary techniques and institutions that structure Rosa's Vienna. But Faschinger's representation of present-day Vienna is by no means as optimistic as Josef's narrative suggests. The passages of the novel that narrate Magnolia Brown's experiences suggest that disciplinary practices have evolved in contemporary Vienna, and have gained autonomy from their institutional supports. As a result, the oppressive influence of disciplinarity is rendered more pervasive. Mapped onto post-war Austrian identity politics, Faschinger's novel can thus legitimately be read as providing a more complex critical deconstruction of the discourse of continuity, which, as we have seen, was of central concern in the traditional *Anti-Heimatroman*.

My reading of Doron Rabinovici's *Suche nach M.* explores its representation of the ways in which Austria's insistence on its status as the first victim of National Socialist aggression has affected the Jewish body's relationship with urban space. I argue that the Vienna of *Suche nach M.* is characterized by a lack of authentic historical depth. This circumstance articulates with the plight of the *Nachgekommenen*, who have been deprived of any sense of their ancestry. In Rabinovici's Vienna, the body is shown to have displaced the city as the primary bearer of history. At the conclusion of the novel, however, Rabinovici formulates his own version of Walter Benjamin's 'redemptive method' in order to suggest a means by which this situation might be resolved.

The representations of Austrian realities discussed in Chapters Four and Five are marked by a three-fold transformation, manifest at once in a generational shift, an insipient 'turn inward', and a reversal of the relationship between the body and the city that emerges from the novels of Faschinger and Rabinovici. Returning to the post-structuralist approaches to the body that underpin my reading of *Wiener Passion*, Chapter Four explores the representation of masculinities in Arno Geiger's *Es geht uns gut* (2005).¹³⁴ The historical scope of the novel's plot allows Geiger to scrutinize three contingent constructions of masculinity, and to examine the ways in which they interact with the national and the familial spheres. In his representation of Richard Sterk, Geiger posits the bourgeois male subject's obligation to function

¹³⁴ Arno Geiger, *Es geht uns gut* (Munich: Hanser, 2005).

effectively in both the familial and national spheres as a potent source of existential insecurity. The sections of the novel that relate to Peter Erlach, meanwhile, provide an ironic representation of military masculinity as masquerade, which also thematizes the relationship that the military model of masculinity sets up between the body of the soldier and urban space. Finally, the sections of *Es geht uns gut* that relate to Philipp Erlach provide an insight into a contemporary Vienna in which the relationship between masculinity, nation and family engenders a three-fold crisis. Geiger's representation of masculinities suggests a 'turn inward', which in fact facilitates a 'turn outward'; his critical deconstruction of the relationship between masculinity and nation extends his novel's critical resonance beyond the borders of Austria's national community. Crucially, Geiger's protagonists also display an ability to structure and manipulate the spaces that they inhabit, so that the urban subject is accorded a degree of agency that was absent in earlier novels.

The key developments whose beginnings are visible in Geiger's novel are articulated with greater tenacity in Thomas Stangl's *Ihre Musik*, which I explore in Chapter Five.¹³⁵ The novel's representation of urban walking establishes the primacy of the body over the city as the determinant of the subject's urban experience. I show in my reading of *Ihre Musik* that Stangl attaches three key functions to the urban stroll. The act of walking enables his protagonists to reanimate the urban environment, to deflect the shocks that are endemic in the urban experience, and finally to circumvent the disciplinary machinations of the institutions that populate the city. Stangl's representation of the ill body, however, initiates a devastating return of biology. Through the narrative strands relating to Dora's experience of multiple sclerosis, Stangl shows that the body's potential to act as an agent far excels that of the contemporary city.

¹³⁵ Thomas Stangl, *Ihre Musik* (Graz: Dorschl, 2006).

CHAPTER ONE

ALPINE ANDROGYNY: THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF GENDER IN NORBERT GSTREIN'S *DAS REGISTER* (1992).

The aim of this first chapter, which provides a brief reading of Norbert Gstrein's *Das Register* (1992), is to assess the validity of Robert Menasse's suggestion that the *Anti-Heimatroman* retained a foothold on Austria's literary landscape during the 1980s. As we have seen, critical consensus suggests that the *Anti-Heimatroman* dominated Austrian literature for some twenty years after the publication in 1960 of Hans Lebert's *Die Wolfshaut*.¹ In protest against the Second Republic's attempts to rehabilitate works of Austrian *Heimatliteratur* that had previously belonged to National Socialist *Blut- und Bodendichtung*,² Austrian writers produced a wide-ranging series of novels that contained mordantly critical representations of provincial life. Writers including Thomas Bernhard, Gerhard Roth, Elfriede Jelinek, Reinhard P. Gruber and Franz Innerhofer transformed the province into 'eine Anti-Gemeinschaft, ein soziales Gefängnis, in dem die Unterdrückten hoffnungslos in der von Geburt an festgelegten Rolle gefangen sind'.³ But both Robert Menasse and Norbert Mecklenburg suggest that these critical representations of the province served a more complex purpose. In the *Anti-Heimatroman*, they maintain, the province functioned as a microcosmic 'Modell' that was intended to reflect the provincial characteristics of Austria as a whole.⁴

Critical responses to the *Anti-Heimatroman* agree that its lifespan was brief. The degree of critical consensus on this point is such that the absence of

¹ Hans Lebert, *Die Wolfshaut* (Munich: Classen, 1960).

² As Joseph McVeigh notes, these included works by Karl-Heinrich Waggerl, Max Mell and Josef Friedrich Perkonig. Cf. "'Das bin nur ich. Wenn ich es bin': Politics and Literature in Austria after 1945", *The German Quarterly*, 61(1988), 5-21 (p. 9).

³ Klaus Zeyringer, *Innerlichkeit und Öffentlichkeit: österreichische Literatur der achtziger Jahre* (Tübingen: Franke, 1992), p. 229.

⁴ Norbert Mecklenburg, *Erzählte Provinz: Regionalismus und Moderne im Roman* (Königstein bei Taunus: Judicium, 1982), p. 41.

the *Anti-Heimatroman* from Austria's literary landscape after the mid-1980s has become something of a truism. Yet even a brief glance at the characteristics of those trends that supposedly replaced it suggests that the situation is considerably more complex. Klaus Zeyringer, for example, contends that the *Anti-Heimatroman* was superseded in the 1980s by a new brand of socially critical writing that provided a unique response to an equally unique set of socio-cultural circumstances. Zeyringer observes that the 1980s saw the emergence of a 'new generation' of writers whose childhood experience of the agricultural way of life had differed from that of their predecessors. Partly responsible for this transformation was the boom in tourism that had begun in the Alpine region during the 1960s. Consequently, the younger generation, including Gstrein, turned its attention to tourism's destructive effects on the provincial community. The image of the *Heimat* that had prevailed during the 1970s, which had been encapsulated neatly in Franz Innerhofer's infamous notion of the 'Bauern-KZ',⁵ was abandoned. It was replaced with representations of the provincial community as '[eine] durch den Ausverkauf an die Fremden schizophren gewordenen Welt, in der [...] unter dem Primat des Fremdenverkehrs das Sozial- und Familiengefüge [...] zusammengebrochen ist'.⁶ An additional focus was the relationship between man and nature. The installation of the infrastructure necessary for the smooth running of the tourism industry signalled a drastic change in the way that nature was perceived and exploited by Alpine communities. Zeyringer writes:

[In der Literatur der achtziger Jahre] ging es wohl um die Ausbeutung des Einzelnen, meist in der [...] Fremdenverkehrswirtschaft, ging es auch um die Ausbeutung der Landschaft. 'Heimat'. Das waren nicht mehr die Heimatbedingungen des Bauern-KZ. In den achtziger Jahren war Heimat, wo noch niemand war.⁷

On closer reading, Zeyringer's observations are contradictory. They acknowledge implicitly the existence of parallels between the 1980s literary trend and its *Anti-Heimat* predecessor, while simultaneously insisting that a completely different conception of *Heimat* emerged during the 1980s, a 'Heimat

⁵ Ibid., p. 230.

⁶ Ibid., p. 229.

⁷ Ibid.

wo noch niemand war'. Such contradiction becomes more apparent on examining responses to Gstrein's *Einer* (1988),⁸ which Zeyringer claims as a paradigmatic example of the trend that he analyses. Gernod Pfandler, for example, warns against overestimating the importance of the anti-tourism motif within *Einer*, suggesting that Zeyringer has in fact misrepresented the novel's primary goal. For Pfandler, *Einer* is to be understood primarily as a critical deconstruction of the provincial voicelessness that Zeyringer associates exclusively with the 1970s *Anti-Heimatroman*.⁹

In what follows, I refute the notion that the *Anti-Heimatroman* became outmoded by the beginning of the 1980s. Analysing the treatment of gender in Norbert Gstrein's third novel, *Das Register* (1992),¹⁰ I demonstrate the degree to which the literary tradition associated with *Fremdenverkehr* was in fact indebted to the model laid down by *Anti-Heimat* authors. I demonstrate the extent to which Gstrein's novel depends upon the manipulation of conventions inherited from both the *Anti-Heimatroman* itself, and the *Heimatroman* whose generic norms it sought to deconstruct. Subsequently, I argue that Gstrein's treatment of the gendered body feeds into an engagement with Austrian national identity that adopts the 'Provinz als Modell' convention that Mecklenburg perceives as the foundation for the *Anti-Heimatroman*. Before proceeding, however, I expand my preliminary comments on the notion of *Heimat* from the introductory chapter by reviewing briefly the role that gender occupies in the discourse that surrounds it.

'FRAUENHEIMAT—MÄNNERWELT'.¹¹

Attempts to define *Heimat* are complicated by the variety of the term's applications across Germanophone culture.¹² In order to circumvent this

⁸ Norbert Gstrein, *Einer* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1988).

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ Norbert Gstrein, *Das Register* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1992). Further references to this work will appear in the body text, identified as *DR*.

¹¹ Cf. Elisabeth Büterfing, 'Frauenheimat, Männerwelt: Die Heimatslosigkeit ist weiblich', in *Heimat: Analysen, Themen, Perspektiven*, ed. by W Cramer and A. Klein (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1990), pp. 416-436.

problem, Elizabeth Boa and Rachel Palfreyman go in search of the term's *sine qua non*. They find it through recourse to a psychoanalytic paradigm that foregrounds the role that the *Heimat* plays in the affirmation of the subject's identity. *Heimat*, they suggest, is best conceived as a 'bounded medium' that stimulates the process of identification with 'whatever [...] may fill the empty signifier to fuel a process of definition [...] which feeds and sustains a sense of identity'.¹³ Gendered readings of *Heimat* tend to be either anthropological or psychoanalytic in orientation, approaches that intersect at crucial junctures. Following Gisela Ecker, Boa and Palfreyman figure *Heimat* as the phallic mother, and the longing for a return to it as a desire for the wholeness of the imaginary order, with all the connotations of regression that such a reading possesses. With Lacan, Boa and Palfreyman insist, however, that the desire for the imaginary order can never be fulfilled, because the postpartum infant is always already subject to the cultural constraints imposed by the social world. As a result, *Heimat* does not represent the pre-cultural exclusively, but instead occupies the border between nature and culture.¹⁴

The anthropological reading of gendered *Heimat* is also compatible with Lacanian psychoanalysis. Elisabeth Bütterfing identifies as the foundation of *Heimat* an imperative of patrilineal primogeniture that replicates the patriarchal family structure.¹⁵ In Bütterfing's conception, the *Heimat* is synonymous with the homestead and the property associated with it. Bütterfing observes that the farmer traditionally passed the *Heimat* to his eldest son. If this transition occurred during the farmer's lifetime, the son became responsible for the homestead, while his father was demoted to the lowly rank of farmhand. As in the traditional kinship system, women were considered 'part of the package'; Peter Blicke notes that '[t]hey were included in the transaction, becoming maids and farmhands to their son, their husband, their older brother or their

¹² Elizabeth Boa and Rachel Palfreyman, *Heimat; A German Dream: Regional Loyalties and National Identity in German Culture 1890-1990* (New York; Oxford: OUP, 2000), p. 9.

¹³ Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁵ Bütterfing, 'Frauenheimat', p. 417.

nephew'.¹⁶ This reading of *Heimat*, therefore, is founded on a gendered dichotomy in which men function as the owners of the *Heimat*, which is 'embodied' or 'borne' by women.

Büterfing's observations are relevant for the interpretation of gender in the *Anti-Heimatroman* because they resonate clearly with the legal provisions that govern the bequest of farmsteads in Austria. The mode of inheritance that Büterfing outlines is enshrined explicitly in legislation passed in the Tyrol, where *Das Register* is set. Until 1989, the farmer was legally required to entail the farmstead upon a single beneficiary, the so-called *Anerber*. The law permitted the farmer to name his successor during his lifetime, but if the *Anerber* had not been chosen by the time the farmer died, patrilineal primogeniture came into effect.¹⁷ The reform of 1989 revokes this provision, but stipulates that those of the farmer's offspring who have received agricultural training should be given precedence.¹⁸ Significantly, these conventions are restricted to the realm of agriculture, and diverge from the general provisions of Austrian inheritance law, which insist on the equal division of parental assets amongst their surviving offspring.¹⁹

Büterfing's observations are lent further relevance when considered in the light of feminist anthropology. Studies by such critics as Gayle Rubin and Luce Irigaray show that the principle of patrilineal primogeniture has significant socio-cultural implications outside the limited sphere of Germanophone *Heimat*. Following Levi-Strauss, Rubin and Irigaray identify the incest taboo as an essential pre-condition for the emergence of culture, and suggest that the exogamic exchange of women is essential if this taboo is to be enforced and culture to remain intact. As both critics demonstrate, the exogamic foundation of kinship relations creates a society in which women become the

¹⁶ Peter Blickle, *Heimat: A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland* (New York: Camden House, 2002), p. 101.

¹⁷ 'Gesetz vom 12. Juni 1900, betreffend die besonderen Rechtsverhältnisse geschlossener Höfe, wirksam für die gefürstete Grafschaft Tirol', para.15 <<http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10001710>> [Accessed 2 July 2011].

¹⁸ Ibid., para. 16 (1).

¹⁹ 'Änderung des Gesetzes betreffend die besonderen Rechtsverhältnisse geschlossener Höfe', para. 15 (1) and para. 15. (2) <http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/BgblPdf/1989_657_0/1989_657_0.pdf> [Accessed 2 July 2011].

passive object of transactions among men.²⁰ Taking this principle as their departure-point, Irigaray and Rubin carve out divergent but complementary argumentations that foreground the dichotomy of biological sex and cultural gender. For Rubin, the maintenance of the incest taboo through exogamy produces a 'sex/gender system' that '[shapes] the biological raw material of human sex and procreation [...] by human, social intervention [...]'.²¹ The production of gender occurs on the subject's entry into the family unit, which confers upon it an identity that is determined by sexual and generational distinctions. The 'socially imposed division of the sexes' that governs the formation of gendered identities reproduces the matrix of relationships that place women outside the transactions that facilitate their distribution among men.²² The sex/gender binary is equally important for Irigaray. Her argumentation maps Marx's analysis of the commodity onto gender relations by figuring biological sex and cultural gender as congruent with the use-value and exchange-value of the commodity.²³

The nature/culture and sex/gender binaries, as well as Büterfing's distinction between the male 'owner' and the female 'bearer' of *Heimat* and the principle of patrilineal primogeniture are valuable concepts through which the treatment of gender in *Das Register* might be evaluated. In Gstrein's province, culture becomes synonymous with capitalism, and nature is forcibly subordinated to capitalist imperatives. Consequently, masculinity and femininity each become subject to the cash nexus, so that the commodification that feminist anthropology restricts to women is extended to men. As a result, the gender binary that underpins the discourse of *Heimat* is destabilized and the female bearer of *Heimat* values is excluded from the commercialized province. This exclusion necessitates an androgynous, and impotent, conceptualization of the *Heimat* itself.

²⁰ Luce Irigaray, *This Sex which is not One*, trans. by Catherine Porter (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 170.

²¹ Gayle Rubin, 'The Traffic in Women: Notes on the Political Economy of Sex', in *Towards and Anthropology of Women*, ed. by Ranya R. Reiter (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975), pp. 157-210 (p. 165).

²² *Ibid.*, p. 179.

²³ Irigaray, *Sex*, p. 170.

***DAS REGISTER* AND THE (NON-) HEGEMONIC HEIMAT.**

The narrative economy of *Das Register* is unconventional in many ways. It is founded, however, on a traditional frame narrative. The framing narrative relates events that occur after the main protagonists, brothers Vinzenz and Moritz, return home for the wedding of their childhood friend, Magda. From the outset, the reader is aware that, unbeknown to one another, both brothers had relationships with Magda as adults. The substance of the framing narrative is provided by a conversation between Vinzenz and Moritz and their sister, Kreszenz, who owns their family home. During their exchange, Kreszenz interrogates her brothers about their relationship with Magda, but they obstinately refuse to answer her questions. The framed narrative is dominated by the brothers' memories of their father and of Magda. The development of these relationships, rather than the brothers' failed careers as academic and professional skier respectively, provides the material for the novel's main narrative strands. These strands thematize most explicitly the problematic relationship that the novel sets up between gender and commercialism. In order to unravel this relationship, we need to consider the concept of 'hegemonic masculinity', championed primarily by R.W. Connell. Connell identifies 'an ordering of versions of masculinity and femininity at the level of the whole society', which is predicated on 'the global dominance of men over women'.²⁴ This hierarchy results in the definition of a hegemonic form of masculinity, which does not exclude other forms, but constructs itself in relation to them.²⁵ Connell's arguments are borne out, but modified, in the *Anti-Heimatroman*. Here, the social hierarchy is determined not solely by the male domination of women, but also through the privileging of a particular form of masculinity. In Winkler's *Der Ackermann aus Kärnten*, for example, hegemonic masculinity is synonymous with the physical strength that is required to act as 'lebendiges Werkzeug' for the upkeep of the homestead.²⁶ But hegemonic masculinity functions here to exclude all other forms. The novel's protagonist,

²⁴ R.W. Connell, *Gender and Power* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), p.183.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Josef Winkler, *Das wilde Kärnten: Menschenkind, Der Ackermann aus Kärnten, Muttersprache* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1995), p. 304.

whose sickly constitution prevents him from undertaking the labour required of him, is put to work in the kitchen with his mother, and acts as 'Kindermädchen' to his younger brother.²⁷ Thus, gender relations in the *Anti-Heimatroman* are structured around a dichotomy that explicitly does not correspond to the binary of biological sex; those men who are unable to function effectively on the farm are automatically feminized.

As in Winkler's novel, the hegemonic construction of masculinity that operates in *Das Register* is determined by the protagonists' father. From an early age, Vinzenz and Moritz are taught to venerate Ernest Hemingway, whom their father glorifies as a paragon of masculinity, and their paternal grandfather, whose involvement in Alpine tourism afforded him considerable wealth. The conflation of these figures in an ideal of masculinity modernizes the relationship between man and nature at the centre of the traditional *Heimatroman*. The central protagonist of *Heimatliteratur* was the farmer, who tilled the land in order to produce food for his family, thereby transforming it into *Heimat*. Similar values are encoded in references to Ernest Hemingway, who was taught from an early age to emulate a brand of sportsmanship that was subject to stringent regulations that codified the ways in which nature could and could not be exploited.²⁸ As a *Fremdenverkehrspionier* meanwhile, the protagonists' grandfather symbolizes an entirely different relationship between man and nature. The tourism industry transforms nature itself into a commercial product, which is packaged and appropriated through activities such as hiking and skiing. In *Das Register*, this dynamic is mapped explicitly onto gender relations through the family mantra, 'Geld macht glücklich, Geld macht geil' (*DR*, p. 125).

The extent to which Vinzenz and Moritz internalize this imperative becomes clear during a sequence of episodes that documents their behaviour toward a series of peripheral female characters. The first is a girl whom Vinzenz and Moritz nickname 'Pummel' (*DR*, p.92). The brothers' perception of Pummel recalls Hemingway's descriptions of female characters: they fetishize those body-

²⁷ *ibid.* p. 301.

²⁸ See Susan F. Beegel, 'Hemingway's Education as a Naturalist', in *A Historical Guide to Ernest Hemingway*, ed. by Linda Wagner-Martin (New York: OUP, 2000), pp. 53-92.

parts (including upper thighs, breasts and cleavage) that are associated with female sexuality. Watching from a window as she passes by, the protagonists imagine kidnapping Pummel, plying her with alcohol and raping her (*DR*, pp. 92-93). This fantasy of sexual domination is juxtaposed in the following episode with the boys' behaviour toward the family's cleaner. In the absence of their parents, the brothers, as 'Hausherren' (*DR*, p. 93), supervise the cleaner in order, ostensibly, to prevent her from stealing. At the same time, however, they tempt her to do exactly this by laying a thousand-shilling note on the carpet, in the hope that, having taken the bait, she will have sex with them to ensure their silence. The final episode in the sequence is an account of the protagonists' first sight of a prostitute, whom they follow to a gravel-pit on the edge of town and observe as she has sex with a client (*DR*, p.95).

On first reading, the two final episodes in this sequence imply a mutually supportive relationship between masculinity and commercialism whereby control over money is synonymous with patriarchal authority over women, while simultaneously confirming the protagonists' ability to wield that authority. This reading is borne out by the brothers' assumption of a voyeuristic position in relation to the women whom they encounter. Several elements of each episode, however, work against this interpretation. The most obvious is the cleaner's refusal to succumb to the protagonists' trap. Rather than stealing the money, she lays it aside (*DR*, p. 94). Paradoxically, this disappointment can be accounted for by an alternative reading of the protagonists' voyeurism, the conventional interpretation of which is relativized in Lacanian psychoanalysis. Lacan differentiates between the gaze and the eye, or what Kaja Silverman refers to as the look.²⁹ According to Lacan, the voyeuristic subject acknowledges its own lack by desiring the object of its look. This obligatory acknowledgement subordinates the subject to the gaze, which exists outside desire, and 'disturbs him, overwhelms him, and reduces him to shame'.³⁰ Thus, the masculinity that Vinzenz and Moritz display here, which hinges explicitly on exaggerated sexual desire, can be read as a source of emasculation. This reading is borne out by the

²⁹ Kaja Silverman, *Male Subjectivity at the Margins* (New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 129.

³⁰ Jacques Lacan, *Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1978), p. 84.

cleaner's refusal to accede to their desires, a testament to the brothers' inability to wield patriarchal authority even when it is delegated to them explicitly. Even at this early juncture, therefore, the stability of the protagonists' masculinity, and their ability to act as 'owner' of the female *Heimat*, is cast into question. This uncertainty intensifies during the protagonists' adulthoods. Each experiences an instance of emasculation that forces him to acknowledge his inability to wield patriarchal authority. Each brother's emasculation occurs under different circumstances, and contributes in a different way to the novel's treatment of gender. Whereas Moritz's experience provides insight into the presentation of women in *Das Register*, Vinzenz's links Gstrein's treatment of gender explicitly to the question of Austrian national identity.

THE EMASCULATING *HEIMAT*

Moritz's experience of emasculation is linked intimately with Magda, whose relationship with him is emphasized during the novel more than her affair with Vinzenz. Magda's relationships with both brothers involve regression to a mode of interaction with nature that transcends its exploitation in the service of capital accumulation, and is thus more reminiscent of the relationship between man and nature showcased in traditional *Heimatliteratur*. Magda walks in the mountains and forests with Vinzenz (*DR*, p. 191), and embarks on a train journey with Moritz during which aspects of the surrounding countryside are emphasized (*DR*, p. 155). Such activities imply the abandonment of the imperative of commercial exploitation of natural resources on which the protagonists' interpretation of the relationship between man and nature is predicated. Significantly, however, the way in which each relationship is described betrays the instability of the companionship that characterizes it. This manifests itself in the analogies that the narrator draws between both relationships and scenes from a film (*DR*, pp.152-153, 188), which lends each of them an air of fiction. These inferences are coupled with hints toward the artificiality of Magda's ability to alter the brothers' perception of nature. Despite the prominence of the natural in the narration of Moritz and Magda's train journey, for example, the train is synonymous with the capitalist exploitation of

nature, which was manifest in the building of the railways. The spectre of commercial exploitation is reinforced by Vinzenz's insistence on telling stories about his grandfather during his walks in the mountains (*DR*, p. 191). As these devices suggest, the brothers' escapist fantasies are short-lived. On Moritz's return from America, Magda takes a pregnancy test that turns out positive (*DR*, p.208), a result whose consequences are telling. That evening, Magda, wearing a cocktail dress, ballet shoes and too much makeup, sits in a bar and flirts with waiters. She drinks herself into a stupor, vomiting in a taxi, returning to her hotel naked, and urinating in her sleep (*DR*, p. 209). In order to appreciate the significance of Magda's reaction, we must map onto it Irigaray's theory of women as commodities. Irigaray's observations modify the nature/culture binary by redefining the cultural role that feminist anthropology and Lacanian psychoanalysis assign to women as a purely capitalist one. Irigaray demonstrates that women evince properties of the Marxian commodity. She notes that '[women] [...] manifest themselves as commodities insofar as they have two forms, a physical or natural form, and a value form'.³¹ To attain a value form, Irigaray states, a 'plus-value' must be added to the 'natural form' of the woman-as-commodity. This 'plus-value' is determined by the extent of a woman's equivalence to a third term, namely her 'value of and for man'.³² Irigaray's meaning here is characteristically unclear; however, we may deduce that these values are expressed by a woman's attempt to conform to a paradigm of femininity that both reflects and arouses male desire, and thus the extent that her acquisition by a man will contribute to the reinforcement of his own masculinity. The value of the commodity, Irigaray suggests, 'lies in its social element. But that social element is added on to its nature, to its matter, and the social subordinates it to a lesser value, a non-value'.³³ As commodities, women are therefore endowed with two irreconcilable bodies: 'a natural body', which signifies use-value, and an 'exchangeable body', which is congruent with exchange-value. Because women can only function as manifestations of

³¹ Irigaray, *Sex*, p. 175.

³² *ibid.* p. 177.

³³ *Ibid.* p. 179.

exchange value, however, their 'natural' body is negated irrevocably by their 'exchangeable body'.³⁴

On discovering her pregnancy, Magda undergoes a transformation that is illuminated by Irigaray's theory. Her appearance in the bar, wearing a cocktail dress and too much make-up, suggests an attempt to show off her exchangeable body, adding value to her natural body by perpetuating a form of femininity that reflects masculine values. Her potential to act as a willing object of exchange among men is underlined by her flirting with the waiters. Her subsequent actions, vomiting, urinating, and entering her hotel naked, divest Magda of those facets of her femininity that comprise her 'exchangeable body', reducing her to a manifestation of not only natural, but abject corporeality.³⁵ As Irigaray suggests, however, the natural body of the woman-as-commodity is worthless, because it is subordinated completely to the exchangeable body. Magda's reaction to her pregnancy confirms that these elements of the woman-as-commodity are mutually exclusive. Her pregnancy means that she will cease to be a valid object of exchange amongst men, and thus be unable to function as a commodity. Magda's reaction is to attempt suicide; when this fails, she leaves her hometown and is not mentioned again within the framed narrative.

Magda's reaction to her pregnancy, and her subsequent decision to leave her hometown, modifies the role of women in *Heimat* discourse. In keeping with the *leitmotif* of nature's subordination to capitalist imperatives, Magda's departure from the province confirms that women can function only as manifestations of 'exchange value' that automatically negates the 'use-value' to which it attaches itself. As abstracted exchange-value, femininity thus becomes an empty signifier, evoking a commercialized construction whose material referent is absent. This is confirmed by Moritz's response to Magda's pregnancy. A week after the attempted suicide, Moritz has sex with a prostitute. In this figure, Irigaray notes, 'nature has been used up': the prostitute's exchange-value is determined by the fact that she has been appropriated fully by man.³⁶ Irigaray

³⁴ *ibid.*

³⁵ For a definition of 'abjection', see Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).

³⁶ Irigaray, *Sex*, p. 183.

does not mention the role of the cash-nexus in this transaction, nor the fact that it reifies the abstract relations that she identifies. Moritz's rejection of Magda in favour of the prostitute reaffirms the pre-eminence of economic exchange over acquisition through inheritance and marriage at the base of the *Heimat* discourse and thereby emphasizes the role of capitalism as the imperative that underpins gender relations in Gstrein's province.

As Moritz discovers, however, the brand of femininity purveyed by the prostitute is a superficial one. This superficiality is manifest in references to the prostitute's wig, which parallel allusions to Magda's hair that are a recurrent feature of the narrative (*DR* p. 69, for example). Accordingly, the narrator's description of the ensuing sex act, which is characterized as 'ein Theater' (*DR*, p.212), underlines the speciousness of that brand ownership that is propagated through economic exchange. Moritz's encounter with the prostitute has a further important consequence. In seeking her out, Moritz attempts to reignite the form of masculinity that governed his adolescent encounters with the opposite sex. Attempting to recover masculinity through payment for sex casts masculinity itself as a commodity that can be obtained exclusively through purchase. The fact that it has to be paid for, and that a prostitute is cast as its purveyor, however, invalidates masculinity as a result of the emasculation inherent in the need to pay for sex. Correspondingly, Moritz's encounter with the prostitute impedes his gaze, forcing him to acknowledge his inability to wield patriarchal authority; Moritz '[weiss] [...] nicht, wo schauen' (*DR*, p. 211) as the prostitute undresses.

The commodification of masculinity through the prostitute is an element of a problematic that is explicated more fully in the narration of Vinzenz's career as a professional skier. This plot-strand complicates the novel's presentation of gender by examining the role that its production plays in the reinforcement of national identity. As his career progresses, Vinzenz becomes complicit in the reproduction of hegemonic masculinity by national institutions, namely sport and the media. His subservience to these institutions, however, obliterates his ability to sustain a coherent gender identity.

The connection between sport and masculinity is well documented. R.W. Connell, for example, describes sport as 'the leading definer of masculinity in

mass-culture'.³⁷ Significantly, Connell recognizes that sport's ability to produce hegemonic masculinity is predicated on its manipulation of the male body. He suggests that 'the embodiment of masculinity in sport involves a whole pattern of bodily development [...] a combination of superior force (provided by size, fitness, teamwork) and superior skill (provided by planning, practice and intuition), will allow one side to win'.³⁸ The passages that follow Vinzenz's decision to pursue a career as a skier highlight his attempts to mould his body in order to acquire the skills and the strength that are the essential characteristics of hegemonic sporting masculinity:

Meistens vor dem Mittagessen ging er in die eigens im Keller eingerichtete Kraftkammer und quälte, stahlte, malträtierte sich an allen möglichen Geräten: Stahlkonstruktionen mit Armen, Beinen und Tentakeln [...]. Am Nachmittag machte er einen Dauerlauf mit allen möglichen Geschicklickeits- und Krafteinlagen oder sprinterte einmal den Fitness-Parcours oder die Schotterhalde am Stadtrand auf und ab [...]. (*DR*, pp. 137-138).

As Vinzenz's career progresses, emphasis shifts from the body itself as a locus of masculinity to the inscription of masculinity on the body's surface. After Vinzenz joins the national team, no mention is made of physical training. Instead, the guiding motif is that of the 'entsprechendes Äußeres' (*DR*, p. 158). The maintenance of this exterior necessitates the reproduction of a form of masculinity that is incompatible with the hegemonic masculinity of sport. The team are taught table manners and ballroom dancing (*DR*, p.159), an activity that requires a 'whole pattern of bodily development',³⁹ but does not demand the strength that is associated with the hegemonic masculinity produced in the sporting arena. Subsequently, the body as a locus of masculinity disappears completely, as the team's bodies become mere surfaces onto which constructions of masculinity are projected. As his career progresses, Vinzenz thus undergoes transformation similar to Magda's. In order to progress as a skier, Vinzenz manipulates his 'natural' body in order to give it a 'plus-value' whose character is defined by a culturally-constructed paradigm of sporting masculinity. On joining the national team, however, the 'third term' according to which this 'plus-value' is defined, alters. Vinzenz's saleable 'cultural body' must

³⁷ R.W. Connell, *Masculinities*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Polity, 2005), p. 54.

³⁸ *ibid.*

³⁹ *ibid.*

be reworked in order to conform to the standard of masculinity associated with a stage-managed ideal of Austrian-ness that can be packaged and sold by the state through the media. This contention is reinforced by the fact that the team is taught to speak High German, an obligation that forces them to perpetuate a homogenized national identity at the expense of their regional particularities.

Vinzenz's status as a commodity is further underlined by the manner in which his duty to his sponsors manifests itself. Vinzenz appears in photographs in which his body is covered in commercial logos and emblems. Such is the extent of Vinzenz's submission to his sponsors that, on viewing a photograph of him in underwear behind a pair of skis, 'man sah sich gezwungen, nach Tätowierungen zu suchen' (*DR*, p. 180). Once more, the masculinity that Vinzenz perpetuates in these photographs proves incompatible with the hegemonic masculinity of sport. Vinzenz is pictured 'in mühelos und gerade in ihrer Mühelosigkeit wie einstudiert einwirkenden Posen' (*DR*, p.180), a description that contrasts sharply with the self-inflicted torture that he undergoes at the start of his career. In these photographs, Vinzenz's body becomes the locus of capitalist imperatives, so that he takes up the feminine role as the passive object of economic exchange between the national team and the various skiing-companies that he is forced to represent. The ideals of masculinity that Vinzenz performs for his masters prove incompatible with the maintenance of a stable gender identity. The team receive manicures and pedicures, are made to wear make-up for public appearances, and are forced to dance with one another during their classes (*DR*, p. 159). Thus, the strict codification of gender roles inherent in ballroom dancing breaks down. Perhaps more significantly, however, Vinzenz's appearance in the photograph replicates, *ex-negativo*, the scopical transaction in which he and his brother were involved as adolescents. Whereas Vinzenz and Moritz constantly occupied a voyeuristic position in relation to the various female characters they observed, it is Vinzenz who on this occasion becomes the object of the gaze. Furthermore, the description of Vinzenz's photograph has none of the voyeuristic connotations that were explicit in the brothers' perceptions of the women they observed. The narrator's use of the third person singular 'man' intensifies the objective and abstract nature of the gaze to which Vinzenz is subject. By appearing in the photograph,

therefore, Vinzenz is forced to subject himself once more to the gaze that frustrated his ability to wield patriarchal power as an adolescent.

The completion of Vinzenz's emasculation occurs after he is forced to leave the national team due to the injuries that he sustains from a fall during a race. During a trip to America, he is offered a bit-part in a television series, playing an Austrian ski-instructor whose main role is 'breit lachend "hi, I'm Austrian, hi" [zu sagen] und gelangweilten und langweiligen Ehefrauen ein paar Stunden Verliebtheit vorzutäuschen' (*DR*, pp. 213-214). Vinzenz's role as ski-instructor doubly underlines the emptiness of gendered signifiers and takes his performance of commercialized masculinity to its logical conclusion. Not only must Vinzenz perform masculinity through his acceptance of a fictional role, but the role itself also requires a meta-performance of simulated masculinity. By feigning love for the women onscreen, Vinzenz foregrounds the performative nature of gender relations, explicitly depriving both masculinity and femininity of anything but a fictional referent. The empty form of masculinity that Vinzenz perpetuates becomes the only referent for Austrian national identity, so that the figure of the ski-instructor ironizes the principle of the 'entsprechendes Äußeres' (*DR*, p. 158) to which the national ski team are forced to conform. Given the direct involvement of the Austrian state in Vinzenz's training, the motif of the 'entsprechendes Äußeres', arguably functions to critique Austria's maintenance of an acceptable exterior in the face of its involvement in the Second World War and the Holocaust. Within this narrative strand, then, Gstrein implicitly castigates national memory politics, thus engaging in the social criticism that was the main goal of the *Anti-Heimatroman*. In the narrative strand that encapsulates Vinzenz's career, both national identity and masculinity are exposed as empty signifiers that refer solely to fictional, stylized constructs.

DAS REGISTER AND THE ANDROGYNOUS HEIMAT

The emasculation that Vinzenz and Moritz experience feeds into the alternative discourse on inheritance that *Das Register* sets up, which, crucially, constitutes an additional, and arguably more potent, source of social criticism. Gstrein

deconstructs the mode of patrilineal primogeniture that governs the generational transfer of farmsteads in the Tyrol by extrapolating and dramatizing the situation of those family members who are excluded from it. The mode of familial inheritance set up in *Das Register* is predicated on androgyny. In order to recognize this, it is necessary to examine the structure of the brothers' family. As in *Anti-Heimat* narrative, the family is dominated by the protagonists' father, whose supremacy is complemented by an almost total lack of reference to their mother. On the few occasions on which she is mentioned, she is presented as subordinate to her husband (*DR*, p. 82). This marginalization of the maternal and emphasis on the paternal is replicated in the family's collective memory, which emphasizes the paternal grandfather at the expense of maternal lineage. While the former is perceived as the source of the protagonists' positive characteristics, the maternal line is consistently blamed for their negative traits (*DR*, p. 53). Given the association of the *Heimat* with the phallic mother, *Das Register's* exclusion of the maternal further modifies traditional *Heimat* paradigms. The exclusion of the woman from her role as bearer of *Heimat*, which is replicated in Magda's ejection from the province after her pregnancy, leads to the downfall of the gendered *Heimat* discourse because the relation of ownership on which it is predicated breaks down. The ejection of the mother means that the father must become both the owner and the bearer of the *Heimat*.

Accordingly, the androgynous *Heimat* is personified in *Das Register* by the protagonists' father. Despite his obsession with masculinity, his gender identity is problematic, a circumstance that is implicit in his obsession with Ernest Hemingway. Despite his status as an icon of masculinity, Hemingway's novels present gender as a nebulous construct, and feature a number of androgynous characters. Furthermore, evidence suggests that Hemingway himself was unsure of his own sexuality.⁴⁰ The problematic nature of the father's gender identity is manifest in his relationship with his sons. His exaggerated expectations of them cast him, rather than their mother, in the role of the oppressive *Heimat* from which both brothers wish to escape. These

⁴⁰ For more on Hemingway's treatment of androgyny, see Mark Spilka, *Hemingway's Quarrel with Androgyny* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2000).

expectations emerge from the father's desire to compensate for his own inability to emulate the success of his father, and thus cast the validity of his masculinity into doubt. Unable to inherit the family hotel because of his status as the second son, the brothers' father was ejected from the village to follow a career in teaching. The phrase he uses to describe this event is significant; he maintains that he was 'hineingzahlt' into his career (*DR*, p.60), a circumstance that replicates the treatment of traditional *Anti-Heimat* protagonists. Denied the means to acquire capital through inheritance, the protagonist's father becomes the object of a financial transaction that is initiated by his own father, and is thereby feminized. As second son, he is unable to transfer patriarchal authority to his sons, endowing them instead with an inability to wield it. Ultimately, patriarchal authority, in the guise of the 'Register' to which the title alludes, passes to Kreszenz, who therefore embodies both aspects of the gendered binary that underpins the *Heimat* discourse. By inheriting the paternal home, she becomes the 'owner' of the *Heimat*, while at the same time functioning as the 'bearer' of *Heimat* values by becoming a mother. This configuration, however, proves equally infelicitous. Kreszenz becomes caught in a cycle of masturbation and severe self-harm, masochistic tendencies that provide a hyperbolic counterpoint to her brothers' experiences of emasculation (*DR*, pp. 28-29).

Das Register thus modifies the traditional relationship between the male owner and the female bearer of *Heimat*. Generational inheritance is replaced by economic exchange as the means by which both masculinity and femininity are acquired. Thus, the principle of patrilineal primogeniture that facilitated the transmission of the *Heimat* from one generation to the next is disrupted. The owner and bearer of *Heimat* are conflated into one androgynous entity. The object of generational transmission is no longer the *Heimat* itself, but rather the inability to wield the authority necessary for its ownership. The question remains, however, as to why the principle of generational transmission is disrupted in this way. The answer has implications for the representation of national identity in the novel, which are bound up with the 'Register' referred to in the title.

As suggested above, the 'Register' constitutes a manifestation of the paternal signifier, the Name of the Father. Significantly, the passage of this signifier from one generation to the next occurs in a manner analogous to the acquisition of women by men at the basis of the *Heimat* discourse. Indeed, possession of the phallus, with which the paternal signifier is aligned, guarantees that the son will be able to possess a woman. Mapped onto the *Heimat* discourse, this suggests that paternal authority, transmitted through the entailing of the farmstead, guarantees the son's ability to own the female *Heimat*. The characteristics of the 'Register', however, suggest that the traditional *Heimat* can no longer function adequately as the object of generational exchange because it becomes synonymous with generational guilt.

The 'Register' is a book that contains the receipts for every purchase made by the protagonists' father on his sons' behalf. At the same time, however, it represents the father's inability to emulate the commercial success of his own father, suggesting an attitude to money indicative of meagre financial means. Thus, the 'Register' becomes a manifestation of paternal guilt, now entailed on the younger generation. In order to expiate their father's guilt at being unable to do so himself, Vinzenz and Moritz were forced, during childhood, to emulate their grandfather's success. It is important to note that the brothers have no involvement in their father's failures. Rather, their father's guilt is transferred to them in the form of familial obligation. The younger generation's obligation to pay the price of the older generation's guilt is applicable at national level. The price paid for membership of the Austrian nation is to absolve the guilt of the previous generation. It is in this light that the brothers' guilt surrounding their relationship with Magda becomes significant. Despite hints that the brothers' relationship with Magda is a source of guilt, the exact reasons for this reaction remain indeterminate. The lack of ability to determine the precise source of guilt reflects the situation of the second post-war generation of Austrians who have inherited guilt, but have no first-hand experience of its source. In *Das Register*, the 'process of identification' that *Heimat* stimulates in order to reaffirm the subject's sense of identity necessitates the subject's identification with the previous generation's guilt. Thus, guilt simultaneously eclipses and invalidates the *Heimat* as the object of generational exchange, figuring financial

exchange as the only means by which the female *Heimat* can be acquired. Until this guilt is expiated, therefore, the notion of *Heimat* itself must necessarily be considered defunct.

Das Register therefore provides ample grounds on which to dispute the notion that the *Anti-Heimatroman* became obsolete at the beginning of the 1980s. By combining them with an examination of the damaging effects of commercialism on the regional environment, Gstrein inverts many of the conventions inherent in the *Heimat* genre, as well as the conventions relating to *Heimat* and gender more generally. As a result, *Das Register* can be described as a negatively-charged *Heimatroman*. The novel adheres to many of the conventions of the 1970s *Anti-Heimatroman*, deconstructing the social and juridical arrangements that determine the structure of the Austrian province in order to criticize post-war Austrian memory politics. The emphasis on commercialism adds a new dimension to Austria's presentation as *Anti-Heimat*, figuring Austrian national identity as a commercialized concept founded upon the need to present an external front 'acceptable' to the rest of the world, and thus distance the country from the uncomfortable past whose influence continues to linger under the surface.

My reading of *Das Register*, therefore, legitimates Robert Menasse's contention that the generic norms central to the *Anti-Heimatroman* continued to inform the work of a generation of Austrian writers who rose to prominence during the 1990s, thereby laying the foundations for the literary genealogy that this thesis attempts to carry forward. Having established these foundations, I follow the trajectory of the Austrian writers whose novels will be discussed here by turning my attention to the literary construction of Austrian realities in novels that are set in Vienna.

CHAPTER TWO

THE DISCIPLINED CITY: READING FASCHINGER WITH FOUCAULT

DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH

A striking characteristic of ‘disciplinary space’, a category that Michel Foucault develops in his seminal work *Discipline and Punish*, is its repeated identification with the urban environment. Foucault’s observations in the chapter entitled ‘Panopticism’, for example, suggest that the application of panoptic techniques in the plague-ridden town transforms it into ‘a utopia of the perfectly governed city’.¹ Foucault concludes *Discipline and Punish* with a discussion of the ‘carceral archipelago’, which realizes and enriches this vision of rationalist perfection. Foucault shows that the carceral, which he describes using the example of the penal colony at Mattray, is produced, organized and regulated by the micro-techniques of disciplinarity whose adoption as the organizational imperative for penal space produced the prison as an institution. In the final paragraphs of *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault uses an anonymous contribution to the journal *La Phalange*, which sets forth a vision of Paris as a carceral archipelago, as the departure point for a discussion of the viability and durability of the so-called ‘carceral city’, an entire urban complex that is produced by the same micro-technologies of disciplinarity. The carceral city emerges from Foucault’s observations as a dystopic and foreboding modulation of urban form that is dominated by ‘institutions [...] which all tend to exercise a power of normalization’ and thereby ‘fabricate the disciplinary individual’.²

The conclusion of *Discipline and Punish* simultaneously fulfils Foucault’s stated goal and broadens its original terms by reversing the polarity of disciplinary methods. Foucault sees the prison as a congregate of the same disciplinary practices, including distribution, observation and partitioning, that originally ‘[organized] an analytical space’ in such institutions as the army and

¹ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Allan Lane, 1977), p. 198.

² *ibid.* p. 307.

the boarding school.³ But in the carceral system, the prison becomes the epicentre of the city; it provides the main conduit for the flow of disciplinary power, which creates institutions that are capable of amplifying its influence. In short, the 'carceral' emerges as a by-product of the efforts of disciplinary power to reproduce itself. Rather than merely organizing space, as they did in the institutions that were administered by the panopticon, the carceral system attests to the disciplines' ability to produce their own space.

Foucault's ominous description of the carceral attests to a further significant function of the disciplines, which produce not only their own space, but also the bodies that occupy it. Foucault's observations at the beginning of *Discipline and Punish* suggest that the work provides a corrective, an attempt to fill a gap in 'the history of the body'.⁴ Setting out his methodology, Foucault gently reprimands established scholarship for its exclusive attention to the body as a biological phenomenon, and its consequent failure to consider its status as a politicized construct. Alongside its function as 'the seat of needs and various appetites, the locus of physiological processes and the target for attacks of germs and viruses', Foucault insists that the body is 'directly involved in the political field', and is thus 'invested with relations of power'.⁵ For Foucault, disciplinary techniques were intended to produce bodies that were useful as forces of production. To fulfil this function, bodies had to be both 'productive' and 'subjected', qualities that disciplinary techniques were able to instil in the bodies that they produced. Foucault's insistence on the body's function as a site of power relations is the keystone of his work, and has therefore been the object of criticism from numerous quarters. Critics have contested the disciplines' ability to produce and subject the body to the extent that Foucault suggests. Scholars including Elizabeth Grosz, Judith Butler and N. Katherine Hayles have disputed Foucault's conception of the body as an isomorphic construct, each citing different sources of particularity as potential loci of resistance to disciplinary power. Michel de Certeau, meanwhile, has identified practices that counteract Foucault's disciplinary techniques. Chief amongst these is the act of

³ *ibid.* p. 143.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 25.

⁵ *ibid.* pp. 25-26.

pedestrian 'enunciation', which is contingent on the pedestrian's ability to choose a unique trajectory when traversing the city.⁶

It is with these criticisms of Foucault in mind that this chapter, a reading of Lilian Faschinger's *Wiener Passion* (1999) will proceed.⁷ The novel narrates the experiences of African-American actress Magnolia Brown, who travels to Vienna for voice training after being offered the role of Anna Freud in a Broadway musical. Magnolia stays with her elderly Aunt Pia, and takes lessons with Josef Horvath, a self-confessed hypochondriac whose bizarre obsession with Schubert has led him to rent an apartment in the building where the composer died. A few days into her stay, Magnolia discovers in a chest in her Aunt's apartment the autobiography of Rosa Hawelka, a Bohemian serving-girl who travelled from Prague to Vienna in 1890 in search of work. Rosa's autobiography provides the material for the novel's extensive framed narrative. Rosa is born and brought up in the *Kurort* at Marienbad, the illegitimate daughter of a Herr Gerstner, the *Stellvertrende Kurdirektor*, and his cook, Libussa Tichy. When Rosa is twelve, her mother dies after having an abortion, and Rosa herself is sent to a boarding-school in Prague, which is run by Ursuline nuns. Here she meets and has an affair with Olga, who commits suicide after their relationship is discovered by the school staff. Rosa subsequently absconds from the school, and travels to Vienna in order to find work. After suffering consistent maltreatment at the hands of bourgeois employers, Rosa spends the vast majority of her life in state institutions. These include the state psychiatric hospital, a prison for petty criminals at Wiener Neudorf and the Habsburgs' winter residence, the *Hofburg*. While employed here, Rosa meets Karel Hawelka, who marries her because of her resemblance to Kaiserin Sisi, which he forces her to accentuate by wearing a wig. Rosa discovers subsequently that Karel is responsible for the rape and murder of a number of women who resemble the Empress. Following him after he sneaks out one night, Rosa murders Karel in an attempt to defend his latest intended victim. But her plea of

⁶ Cf. Michel DeCerteau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. by Steven Rendall (Berkley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 98-110.

⁷ Lilian Faschinger, *Wiener Passion* (Munich: dtv, 1999). Further references to the work will be given in the body text, identified as *WP*

self-defence falls on deaf ears, and Rosa is incarcerated again, this time in the *Mörderzelle* in the state prison in Vienna's ninth district. It is here, while awaiting execution, that Rosa pens her life story, intending it as a testament to the dangers associated with living a life of grateful servitude in accordance with the legal, social and religious tenets that structure *fin-de-siècle* society.

Faschinger's third novel, much like her earlier work, has been read primarily as an example of feminist writing that uses Rosa's autobiography to expose and condemn the patriarchal, class-based social structure of Vienna at the *fin de siècle*. But the emphasis given in critical assessments to this aspect of the novel overlooks the significance of the framing narrative, which is set in the Vienna of the late 1990s. Here, the exclusionary social structure of the contemporary city has replaced social class with race as the basic principle of its organization. The oppressive influence of the institutions that controlled *fin-de-siècle* society, however, is shown to be largely negated. After outlining in more detail the salient criticisms of Foucault's work, this chapter will demonstrate that Faschinger, rather than simply configuring Vienna as a disciplinary space, uses narrators from a variety of socio-cultural and spatiotemporal backgrounds to construct three distinct narrative conceptualizations of Vienna. These versions of narrated urban space by turns perpetuate, satirize and, ostensibly at least, resist successfully the disciplinary power that is shown to produce the urban space of both present-day and *fin-de-siècle* Vienna. In line with the key critical approaches to Foucault's work, an attempt will be made in the course of the analysis to illustrate how the individual narrators seek to counteract or to resist disciplinary power, and to gauge the success of these attempts.

THE BODY, SPATIALITY AND POWER: FOUCAULT AND HIS DISCONTENTS.

Most critiques of Foucault's work concern his notion of the body, which he perceives as an isomorphic abstraction produced by discourse. He therefore holds that disciplinary mechanisms affect individual bodies in exactly the same way. Various critics, particularly in the fields of psychoanalysis and phenomenology, have occupied themselves with the Foucauldian body and have

found it to be lacking. Particularly at issue in these critiques is Foucault's refusal to acknowledge any source of individuality or particularity in the subject that he discusses. N. Katherine Hayles takes Foucault to task on exactly this point. Drawing on Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Pierre Bourdieu and Elizabeth Grosz, she argues that Foucault's account of the influence of disciplinary techniques on an abstracted body neglects the more particularizing concept of embodiment.

Embodiment is distinct from the body because of its contextual nature. Embodiment is 'enmeshed in the specifics of place, time, physiology and culture which together compose enactment [...], the specific instantiation generated by the noise of difference'.⁸ By prioritizing body over embodiment, Hayles contends, Foucault 'fetishistically reconstructs' the assumptions underlying Panoptic society'.⁹ In an attempt to provide a corrective, Hayles distinguishes between 'incorporating and inscribing practices',¹⁰ which she proposes as a parallel to the dualism of the body and embodiment. While inscription is 'normalized and abstract, in the sense that it is usually considered as a system of signs operating independently of any given manifestation',¹¹ an 'incorporating practice' is encoded into bodily memory by repeated performances until it becomes habitual'.¹² Proceeding from this dichotomy, Hayles illustrates the improvisational nature of embodied practices, which derives from their inherent performativity'.¹³ The contextual aspects of these integrated practices are significant in the context of Foucault's study because they endow the body with characteristics that discourse is incapable of subsuming. Further, the embodied practice, as Bourdieu has demonstrated, inverts a concept that is central not only to *Discipline and Punish*, but to all of Foucault's works that concern themselves with the relationship between the body and power. Whereas Foucault perceives the body as a construct produced

⁸ N. Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 196.

⁹ Ibid. p. 194.

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 199.

¹¹ Ibid. p. 198.

¹² Ibid. p. 199.

¹³ Ibid. p. 198.

by discourse, embodied practices allow the body to produce discourse through cultural practices.

Hayles's critique of Foucault is helpful, insofar as it provides a general introduction to a thesis according to which the body is a site of resistance to the 'techniques' that allow the disciplines to produce and administer bodies. But for the purposes of this study, it is necessary to contextualize Hayles's observations further by narrowing their parameters and aligning the concept of embodiment with experiences of urban space. Significantly, the critical material surrounding embodiment suggests that embodied experience fissures according to categories of race, gender, social class and levels of physical disability. These categories are particularly relevant in the case of *Wiener Passion*, because each of the novel's narrators evinces a source of difference that is linked to their occupation of one of them: Magnolia and Rosa as a result of the gender and ethnic or class origins, and Horvath as a result of his hypochondria. But this taxonomy should be applied cautiously; the narrators' individual embodied experiences are likely to be complicated further by the multifaceted nature of their racial and gender identities. Rosa Hawelka's mixed parentage means that, genealogically, she transcends the class boundaries that constitute her as working-class 'other'. Similarly, Magnolia Brown, as the daughter of an African American and a native Austrian, astounds the Viennese characters in the novel with her 'akzentfreies Wienerisch' (*WP*, p. 472), which apparently stands in direct contrast to her appearance. Finally, Josef Horvath, alongside his hypochondria, displays a disparate gendered identity, having participated in a homosexual relationship and performed female roles during his time as a *Sängerknabe*. That said, a brief overview of the various approaches to the relationship between embodiment and the city is essential for a fuller understanding of its manifestations in *Wiener Passion*.

In her essay 'Throwing Like a Girl', Iris Marion Young emulates Hayles's appeal for particularization when theorizing the body. Young attributes to the female body a specific mode of corporeality that is produced by the incorporated practices that Hayles refers to. The spatial practices that determine feminine body comportment facilitate a specific relationship between the female body and the space in which it orientates itself. In Young's

view, this relationship differs inevitably from that experienced by men. Young's description of this differentiated relationship to space relies heavily on Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*. Beginning with Merleau-Ponty's definition of motility as a locus of intentionality, Young maintains that feminine intentionality is necessarily prohibited by the woman's tendency to underestimate her body's physical capabilities.

Feminine existence [...] does not enter bodily relation to possibilities by its own comportment towards its surroundings in an unambiguous and confident 'I can' [...]. Feminine bodily experience is an *uninhibited intentionality* which simultaneously reaches towards a projected end with an 'I can' and withholds its full bodily commitment to that end in a self-imposed 'I cannot'.¹⁴

The ambivalence that women display toward the object of intentionality is repeated in their relationship with space, where it dictates the possibilities that they consider themselves able to actualize. 'When a woman enters a task [...] she projects the possibilities of that task—and projects an "I can"—but projects them merely as the possibilities of "someone" and not truly her possibilities, and thus projects an "I cannot"'.¹⁵ This 'inhibited intentionality' in turn places the subject in a relation of '*discontinuous unity* with [the female body] itself and its surroundings'.¹⁶ Building on Lacan's distinction between tactile and kinaesthetic information, Young maintains that a woman experiences disunity between the parts of the body that are striving towards an object and those that remain immobile, while 'the undirected and wasted motion is often an aspect of feminine engagement in a task that also manifests this lack of body unity'.¹⁷

In the context of the relationship between the body and the disciplines, Young's approach can be used to corroborate two opposing viewpoints. Since Young herself insists that these incorporated practices of bodily comportment are the result of women's subordination to men, it is tempting to suggest an alteration of the relationship between the body and the disciplines, defining the latter as manifest not only in 'inscribing' but also in 'embodied practices' that

¹⁴ Iris Marion Young, *On Female Body Experience: Throwing Like a Girl and Other Essays* (New York: Oxford: OUP, 2005), p. 36.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

determine the relationship between body and space. But for the purposes of this study, it might be more useful to invert the relationship between space and body that Young describes, and to suggest that the isomorphic nature of disciplinary space, which, as we have seen, is key to the success of the disciplines themselves, cannot account for the different corporealities that are assigned to bodies. As a result of these differentiating relations, therefore, the body needs to be seen not as the locus of disciplinary power, but as a source of resistance to that power.

A useful complement to Young's theories is provided by Michel de Certeau, whose critique of *Discipline and Punish* takes the form of an essay on urban walking. Certeau re-invests the Foucauldian subject with a degree of agency that is contingent on its ability to choose a specific trajectory when moving through urban space. Although the female subject's ability to choose its own trajectory might be said to be limited by Young's 'inhibited intentionality', Certeau emphasizes the agency that derives from the ability to choose from those trajectories that are available. The activity of urban walking thus permits a multitude of subjects to produce a multitude of paths that evade the influence of disciplinary practices.¹⁸

The threads of the preceding discussion, which has touched on embodiment, motility and urban walking, come together in the essay entitled 'Space, Time and Bodies' by Elizabeth Grosz.¹⁹ Grosz once more replicates the appeal for a specifically feminine modality of embodiment, and seeks to interpolate this into a relationship between bodies and cities that is based on the combination of 'two pervasive models' of the interrelationship between bodies and urban space. Grosz's 'causal' model posits the city as a 'product' of the human body, since the body is the force behind the city's original production, and biological human needs direct and regulate the city's subsequent development. Hence, the city becomes a 'projection' of the 'productive possibilities' of the body, which is figured as subordinate to the

¹⁸ Cf. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. by Steve Randall (Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 91-110.

¹⁹ Elizabeth Grosz, *Space, Time and Perversion: Essays on the Politics of Bodies* (New York; London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 83-102.

sovereign 'subject', who inhabits it and uses it as a tool to realize its intentions. This division derives from the supposed binary relation between the design of the city in design on the one hand, and its construction on the other. Grosz identifies two problems with the causal model. She takes issue firstly with the unidirectional relationship between the body and the city that the model sets up, which views the city merely as a product and projection of the body. Secondly, she criticizes the model's insistence on separating subject and body, and the subsequent subordination of the latter to the former. In the 'causal' model, Grosz asserts that the body is demoted to the status of a

[...] [mere] tool or bridge linking a non-spatial [...] consciousness to the materiality and coordinates of the built environment, a kind of mediating term between mind on the one hand and inorganic matter on the other, a term that has no agency or productivity of its own.²⁰

The second model that Grosz sets up assumes that the body and the city are essentially isomorphic. This isomorphism finds its clearest representation in the metaphor of the 'body politic', according to which the king constituted the 'head', while the military provided the 'nerves' etc. But it was rare for the body politic to be assigned a gender, leading Grosz to assume a bias towards the masculine, and therefore to describe the metaphor as an instance of 'the unacknowledged use of the male or the masculine to represent the human'.²¹ This phallocentrism must be exposed and abolished so that the relationship between body and city might be modified to account for a more finely-grained definition of corporeality. Grosz herself produces such a model by combining the 'isomorphic' and the 'causal' models set out above. The result is a model which proposes a reciprocal relationship between the body and the city, viewing the two phenomena as mutually constitutive:

The City is one ingredient of the body, which affects the way the subject sees others and the subject's understanding of and alignment in space, different forms of lived spatiality, verticality of the city as opposed to the horizontality of the landscape must have effects on the way we live space and thus on our corporeal alignments, comportment and orientation. The city is the site for the body's cultural saturation, its takeover by images, representational systems,

²⁰ Ibid., p. 105.

²¹ It is worth pointing out here that the exclusive masculinity associated with modern space, constructed 'by men for men' is analyzed in detail in Anthony Vidler's 'Bodies in Space/Subjects in the City', *Bodies in space/subjects in the city: psychopathologies of modern urbanism*, *differences: a Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 3 (1993), 31-61, to which Grosz's article, particularly with reference to the title, could be said to make implicit reference.

mass media and the arts, the place where the body is representationally re-explored and re-inscribed. The body as a cultural product re-inscribes the urban landscape according to its demographic needs, expanding the limits of the city towards the countryside.²²

Taken together, then, the models explored above, and the third model born out of criticism of the original pair, integrate each of the issues touched on thus far in the examination of critical material relating to the body and its relationship to space, and qualify, modulate and expand on the critical approaches discussed thus far. While Grosz agrees with Hayles and Young regarding the need to accommodate differentiated modes of body comportment when theorizing the body (and cites the city as instrumental in the production of 'sexed corporeality'),²³ many of her observations on the reciprocal relationship between body and city would not look out of place in Foucault. Her description of the city as the stage of the body's 'cultural saturation', and its production as a social construct, is reminiscent of Foucault's demand that the body should be considered as 'directly involved in the political field'.²⁴ Similarities to Foucault multiply as Grosz's investigations progress. She not only describes the city as instrumental in the process of cultural saturation, but also suggests that it 'provide[s] the context in which social rules and expectations are internalized or habituated to ensure social conformity'.²⁵ As a result the city 'must [also] be seen as the immediate locus for the production and circulation of power'.²⁶ For Grosz, then, the anonymous contribution to *La Phalange*, which configured Paris as a carceral city, and Foucault's utopia of the 'perfectly governed city', should not be understood merely as subjective, dystopian conceptions of the urban environment, but rather as representations of phenomena that facilitated the emergence of the modern urban environment. In addition, however, the conceptualizations of corporeality that fissure according to gender, and Grosz's interpretation of the role that power plays in the city, further qualify Hayles's theory of embodiment and expand on the interpretation offered by Young. Whereas the latter cites the disenfranchised position of

²² Grosz, *Space, Time and Perversion*, p. 107.

²³ Ibid., p. 104.

²⁴ Foucault, *Discipline*, p. 25.

²⁵ Grosz, *Perversion*, p. 109.

²⁶ Ibid.

women in society and the continuing dominance of patriarchal influences as the circumstances that have facilitated the emergence of a specifically feminine mode of comportment, she agrees with Hayles's main thesis that practices of motility and comportment are necessarily embodied. In 'Bodies-Cities', by contrast, the opposite seems to be true: Grosz suggests that gendered corporealities and embodied experiences are 'inscribed' on the subject by the urban environment. In effect, therefore, Grosz not only modifies Hayles's observations, but Foucault's as well; for Grosz, the city does not merely produce generic, isomorphic bodies, but is also able to produce 'sexed' bodies. In Grosz's view, it would seem that power has transcended the limits that Foucault attributes to it, developing particularized methods of producing and controlling bodies that are able to take into account the 'noise of difference' generated by context.²⁷ This polyvalence of inscribing practices might, in turn, be seen to limit the validity of Certeau's insistence on the ability of contextual enactments to allow the subject to evade or counteract the influences of disciplinary power. Replicating the structure of *Discipline and Punish*, the examination will identify the role played by disciplinary techniques at an institutional level, and in the wider sphere of the narrated city. The examination of Rosa's narrative will conclude with an analysis of the implications of the narrative's formal aspects which, it will be argued, both accomplish and transcend the ultimate goal of the disciplines, namely the re-modulation of the urban according to the principles of the carceral system. Simultaneously, an attempt will be made to identify the various loci of potential resistance to the disciplines which are alluded to in the novel, and to gauge Rosa's success in availing herself of these.

COMPLETE AND AUSTERE INSTITUTIONS

The institutions with which Rosa comes into contact during her time in Vienna are so numerous that a thoroughgoing examination of her experience in each is impossible in the context of this thesis. But Foucault's observations suggest that this is not necessary: the character of disciplinary institutions, and of the

²⁷ Hayles, *Posthuman*, p. 198.

disciplinary techniques that organize them, are isomorphic. In line with this pronouncement, Rosa's experiences at the hands of each institution, or its representative, can be understood as a variation on a theme whose basic mechanics are repeated as the novel progresses. Thus, a more fruitful way of proceeding is to explore these basic mechanics by examining Rosa's experience in a single institution, and thereafter to examine the methods and effects of their variation as the novel progresses. Particularly fruitful in terms of illuminating the mechanics of the institution is Rosa's treatment whilst in the service of two Viennese *Bürgerfamilien*, whom she serves variously as housemaid and nanny during the opening stages of her time in Vienna. The choice of these two spaces as objects of analysis may seem incongruous, given that they are not institutions in the strictest sense. But this apparent incongruity is the main reason for their selection because, by analyzing their spatial dynamics it is possible to demonstrate the means by which discourses and the practices that uphold them are able to mould spaces according to disciplinary conventions.

On entry into the home of her first employer, Oberpostrat Lidner, Rosa, and more specifically Rosa's body, becomes the object of a specific juridical discourse. Frau Lidner's expectations of Rosa are defined by the *Dienstbotenordnung*, a law whose provisions are explained to her as soon as she starts work. The conditions of service codified in the *Dienstbotenordnung* perform two important functions. First, they constitute a discursive manifestation of the ideal servant, and second, they allow the household in which they are applied to be transformed into a disciplinary space. The first of these functions is performed by the strict codification of the qualities that a *Dienstbote* ought to possess, and the complementary provision of sanctions that can be applied to enforce them. The most obvious of these is a strict and unconditional adherence to the demands of the employer, which can be enforced by corporal punishment should the servant in question refuse to obey. This provision gives the employer limitless power over the body of the *Dienstbote*, which is qualified only by the vague provision that methods of corporal punishment must not exceed the boundaries of '[geziemende] Mäßigung' (WP, p. 210). In addition, the *Dienstbotenordnung* assumes piety, a

circumstance that is manifest in the fact that one of the few privileges that servants are allowed is the right to attend church on Sundays and religious feast-days. The intersection of the judicial and the religious is significant here, particularly given Rosa's subsequent comparison of the officiating priest at the *Kapuzinerkirche* with Pater Bohmil, whose congregation she had belonged to during her time at Marienbad. Bohmil's sermons had glorified the role of the servant and defined unconditional obedience as an essential virtue. In the *Dienstbotenordnung*, therefore, social norms are prescribed and reinforced by means of a feedback loop that operates in this case between the juridical and religious institutions.

The transformation of the household into disciplinary space, meanwhile, is achieved by a combination of factors that proceed either directly from the provisions of the *Dienstbotenordnung* or indirectly from the power that it enables the employer to exercise over the body of the employee. Based on its provisions, the employer's home becomes an enclosed space that the servant can leave only at the times determined by him. This provision is enhanced in various ways by each of Rosa's employers: Frau Gerstner on occasion forces Rosa to forego her Sunday outing so that she can serve the guests at a dinner party; Frau Von Schreyvogel allows Rosa to leave the house only if she ensures that her twin sons do not come into contact with members of the lower classes, and sends her *Hausmeisterin* to spy on Rosa during these outings. Finally, Rosa's third employer, Witwe Galli, refuses to allow Rosa to leave her apartment after discovering a picture that she has taken at the Prater with Hans Holzer. The provision that accommodates the punishment of insufficiently or totally incomplete tasks suggests that the *Dienstbote* must be supervised closely. This is an activity that Rosa's first two employers indulge in constantly; both reprimand her frequently for her failure to complete adequately the tasks she is assigned.

These juridically-codified privations and regulations combine with other forms of subjection that extend the disciplinary space in the domestic sphere and complement various strategies which aim to render her body docile. Rosa's activities, for example, are performed according to a timetable drawn up by each of her employers. Frau Lidner sets Rosa's alarm clock for five o'clock, and

allots her tasks to complete on specific days. In Rosa's narration, each of these tasks is broken down into stages, echoing the 'elementary' character of disciplinary exercises which, as Foucault suggests, increase in complexity as subjects move from rank to rank. In addition, Rosa occasionally has to wait for a signal, rather than a verbal command, to complete her tasks. Frau Gerstner demands that she clean the piano 'jedes Mal nach beendetem Spiel' (*WP*, p. 222). The timetable, the breakdown of tasks and the signal are all disciplinary mechanisms that Foucault sees as key to the production of 'docile bodies'. Conspicuously absent from the list, however, are techniques that regulate the spatiality and motility of the body, i.e. the mechanisms of 'body object articulation' and 'composition of forces', which Foucault delineates with specific reference to the school and to the army. In Rosa's case, these techniques are replaced with a set of mechanisms that regulate her motility and comportment. Many of these have already been identified by Ellie Kennedy, who reads *Wiener Passion* as 'a [...] radical re-appropriation of the picaresque genre'.²⁸ But Kennedy neglects to consider the relationship between the bodily privations to which Rosa is subjected and her constant formation and reformation as the subject of the various discourses that structure *fin-de-siècle* society. In each of the households where Rosa is employed, for example, she is given a uniform that is either too large or too small for her. Kennedy suggests that Rosa's inability to fit into the clothing that betokens the role that she is expected to perform creates a dissonance indicative of her inability to fit into the role itself.²⁹ Interestingly, this stands in contrast to Pfandl-Buchegger's suggestion that Rosa possesses a 'chameleonartige Anpassungsfähigkeit',³⁰ an inherent ability to carry out a variety of roles. A closer reading of the text, however, reveals inconsistencies in both interpretations. Although Rosa is unable to fit into each of the dresses that her employers provide, she is, somewhat incongruously, able to insert herself into the role of psychiatric patient later in

²⁸ Ellie Kennedy, 'Genre Trouble: The Performative Picaresque and Female Identity in Contemporary Austrian and German Women's Narrative (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Queens University, Canada, 2004), p. 86.

²⁹ Kennedy, 'Trouble', p. 112.

³⁰ Ingrid Pfandl-Buchegger, "'Ich reihe die Worte zu Schnüren und knüpfe Netze': Weibliche Identitätssuche in Lilian Faschingers Romanen', *Script*, 19 (2001), 12-23, p. 13.

the novel, when she develops logorrhoea while she is incarcerated in a psychiatric institution that she had entered completely sane. Thus, Kennedy's reading is unable to accommodate the complexity of Rosa's situation, while Pfandl-Buchegger's is marred by the implication that Rosa's ability to fulfil the roles that she is assigned is the result of a (positively connoted) quality that she possesses. Particularly while employed by Frau von Schreyvogel, Rosa's inability to fit into her dresses provides the foundation for a method of corporeal discipline that moulds Rosa's body according to the qualities that a *fin-de-siècle* *Dienstbote* is expected to possess. The uniforms that Rosa is given have all clearly been worn before. The first is described as 'abgetragen', while the second is explicitly referred to as 'das von Ljuba hinterlassene Kleid, das mir zu eng und zu kurz war' (WP, p. 251). The fact that Rosa is forced to wear hand-me-down uniforms indicates two assumptions on the part of the Viennese middle classes. The first would be that the bodies of servants either are, or can become, isomorphic, thus eliminating the concept of embodiment and echoing the assumption that constitutes the keystone of Foucault's conceptualization of the body. Further, however, it can suggest the complete absence of corporeality from the dominant paradigm of the servant, lending weight to the suggestion that this kind of subjectivity is, first and foremost, a discursive construct (borne out by the involvement of the *Dienstbotenordnung* in the construction of the 'ideal' *Dienstbote*). Nevertheless, it is the effects of the 'absence' of the body, or the concept of embodiment that administer and control Rosa's motility during her time as a servant. This becomes particularly clear during her time in the service of the von Schreyvogels

[...] das schwarze Kleid, das ich trug und das mir viel zu eng war, [hatte] auf dem Rücken bald einen langen Riß, weil ich mich häufig bücken mußte, und das fadenscheinige Gewebe schließlich nachgab, worauf Frau von Schreyvogel meinte, zu den Erwartungen, die man an eine Hausangestellte knüpfen dürfe, gehöre unter anderem eine gewisse Anmut und Geschmeidigkeit der Bewegungen, ein harmonischer Einsatz der Kräfte, welcher derlei Ungeschichtlichkeiten von vornehinein entgegenwirke [...] Die zweite Hälfte meines Monatslohnes verwandte ich also auf die Reparatur des Risses in einer [...] Änderungsschneiderei. (WP, p. 255-256)

By providing Rosa with a dress that is too tight, Frau von Schreyvogel is able to control her bodily movements and comportment in order to extract from her the qualities that she expects of her *Dienstbote*. Note that Rosa spends

her money not on a new dress or on its alteration so that it might fit her, but rather merely on the repair of the rip that she caused. In future, therefore, Rosa will have to adhere to Frau von Schreyvogel's edict of 'Geschmeidigkeit der Bewegungen' in order to avoid the unnecessary costs likely to be incurred by a further rip. It is worth noting that the tight clothing that Rosa is forced to wear produces a further restriction on her intentionality. Rather than merely being unable to take advantage of her physical capabilities, she is now forcibly prevented from doing so. Thus, Rosa's relationship with her surroundings is disturbed not only by the embodied practices of feminine acculturation, but also by disciplinary practices which—in this case quite literally—inscribe themselves on her body. Also of note is the fact that those practices that regulate motility are generally complemented by privations that exacerbate Rosa's insecure relationship with the space around her. While employed by the Gerstners, Rosa is constantly sleep-deprived and overworked, a circumstance that eventually leads her to lose consciousness at the top of a ladder, and results in her dismissal. The von Schreyvogels, meanwhile, refuse Rosa adequate sustenance, which causes disorientation that leads to her breaking utensils and staining clothing (*WP*, p. 255). Perhaps the most explicit example of this combination of disciplinary practices, which disrupt both the body as a surface of inscription and the specific corporeality of the subject, occurs during Rosa's tenure as mistress to poet Engelbert Kornhäusel. Duplicating a practice that originated in Baudelaire, Kornhäusel insists that Rosa allow him to write blank verse on her body. But his increasing melancholia causes him to press too hard on her skin, which leads to increased bleeding and sepsis, and means that she is forced to spend weeks convalescing. This event simultaneously formalizes and hyperbolizes the subjection of Rosa's body to the discourses that organize the *fin de siècle*. While in a 'relationship' with Kornhäusel, Rosa is reduced to a purely corporeal entity, banned from speaking or engaging in dialogue to the extent that even the expressions of pain she involuntarily utters incur Kornhäusel's annoyance because they interrupt the monologue to which he subjects her. Thus, Kornhäusel impedes completely Rosa's ability to protest against his manipulation of her body, which he inscribes with a form of

discourse (on this occasion linguistic as well as juridical) that is appropriate to the cultural institution to which he belongs.

In sum, therefore, the foregoing observations regarding the relationship between institutions and the body suggest that the differentiation with which individual subjects are endowed by embodied practices must be removed from consideration as a possible site of resistance against disciplinary practices. The manner in which Rosa's body is manipulated suggests that it is precisely in their refusal to take into account the specifics of body comportment and corporality that the power of disciplinary techniques to produce a docile body lies. The techniques to which Rosa is subject, whether at the hands of the social institution of the middle class, or the cultural institution of authorship, are universally applicable practices whose effect would be equally as destructive regardless of the kind of corporeality to which they were applied.

Thus far, this chapter has explored the role played by disciplinary techniques in the fabrication of both institutional space and the institutional subject. But the existence of spaces in which disciplinary techniques are applied does not yet imply the universal influence that is required for the production of the carceral system. Therefore, the following section will assess the ability of these techniques to extend their influence beyond the institutional spaces that they conventionally organize, focussing instead on their capacity to structure the urban environment at large.

THE PERFECTLY GOVERNED CITY

As I have already suggested, Foucault's 'perfectly governed city' was organized according to the principles of rationalized space and universal surveillance, combined with 'a system of permanent registration'.³¹ The city, as organized according to the principles of panopticism thus constituted an

[...] enclosed segmented space, observed at every point, in which the individuals are inserted in a fixed place, in which the slightest movements are supervised, in which all events are recorded, in which an uninterrupted work of wiring links the centre and periphery, in which power is exercised without

³¹ Foucault, *Discipline*, p. 197.

division, according to a continuous hierarchical figure, in which each individual is constantly located, examined and distributed [...].³²

The dynamics of Rosa's progression through Vienna attest clearly to the existence of techniques of documentation and rationalization, which form the organizational principles of the urban environment. A case in point is Rosa's experience on her entry into the *Vermittlungsstelle* immediately after her arrival in Vienna. Rosa's personal details are recorded (*WP*, p. 208), and a suitable position found for her by Herr Prohaska, the official in charge. By itself, the recording of Rosa's personal details may seem insignificant; but, given the number of servants who visit the *Vermittlungsstelle* and the service that the institution provides, the information collected through the process of recording personal details can be understood as a form of panopticism that documents registrants' progress through their careers, and therefore through the city. Two additional aspects of the exchange between Rosa and Prohaska are significant. First, Prohaska refuses to take into account the knowledge and skills that Rosa possesses when finding a suitable position for her, thereby laying the groundwork for her re-inscription. Second, he rejects her initial requests for the positions of governess and cook, and allocates her the position of chamber-maid instead, a decision that implies the existence of a hierarchical structure even amongst the serving classes to which Rosa belongs; to reach the upper echelons of this hierarchy, moreover, Rosa must gain in both age and experience and thereby achieve a particular 'rank' in the system that is determined by the tasks she is considered capable of performing. The existence of this intra-class ranking system, which replicates almost exactly the hierarchical structure of la Salle's classroom that Foucault describes, attests to the influence of the disciplines on the society that Rosa inhabits.

The role of rational distribution in the configuration of *fin-de-siècle* Vienna's urban space proves still more pervasive as the narrative progresses. Rosa's position in society is repeatedly determined by hierarchical systems of the kind described above. The influence of these hierarchies is visible first in the epithets that Rosa's positions are assigned, and second in the spaces she is allowed to occupy. Perhaps the clearest example occurs when Rosa, unable to

³² *ibid*, p. 198.

find work as a result of her incarceration in the *Frauenanstalt* in Wiener Neudorf, becomes a prostitute. Her first port of call is the *Volksgarten*, where she is rejected by the other prostitutes, who brand her 'Anfängerin' and 'Hurengesindel'. They send Rosa to the *Prater*, which is considered a more suitable location for a prostitute of her stature (*WP*, p. 408). Thus, the ranking system prevalent amongst the prostitutes provides for the distribution of their number across the city according to their rank. It is important to note that this distribution mirrors the distribution of social class across the city. From the outset of Rosa's narrative, the *Prater* is figured, albeit not exclusively, as the domain of the serving classes. It is the location to which Rosa escapes during the free-time that she is allotted and where her romance with Hans Holzer originates. Its constant designation as a *Vergnügungsstätte*, combined with the various events that occur in the *Prater* seemingly imply that it falls outside the reach of disciplinary techniques; however, Rosa's admonition and expulsion by the prostitutes of the *Volksgarten* provides clear evidence that this is not the case. Far from constituting a sanctuary from the rationalizing influence of disciplinary practices, the *Prater* is essential to the city's ability to partition its subjects effectively. It is important to note that part of the reason for Rosa's rejection by the prostitutes in the *Volksgarten* is her appearance. In contrast to the '[...] herausfordend angezogenen und geschminkten Damen [...] in sonnengelber [...] und karmisenroter Toilette' (*WP*, p. 407-408), Rosa's 'häßlicher, weißer Mantel' is deemed inappropriate clothing, and is characterized as 'geschäftsstörend' and 'abstoßend' (*WP*, p. 408); it betrays her as a member of the 'lower classes' of prostitute in a hierarchical system which mimics that which organizes social class. Further, the specific space to which Rosa is banished attests to the density of partitioning that the hierarchical system entails. On her arrival in the *Prater*, Rosa is admonished by the prostitutes who work in the *Hauptallee* for attempting to join them there, because 'die Standplätze unter den Laternen sehr begehrt [seien]'. Instead, she is sent to work 'im Gebüsch der Nebenstraßen' as befits her status as 'Anfängerin' (*WP*, p. 409). As it is, Rosa is saved the indignity of a life as a 'Praterhure' by a more experienced prostitute, who suggests that she visit the *Musikverein*. After attending a concert, she becomes acquainted with Engelbert

Kornhäusel, who rents her a room in the first district, and finally with Kronprinz Rudolf who provides her with a villa in Grinzing complete with servants. Thus as Rosa works her way to the upper echelons of Viennese society, the spaces she is allowed to occupy alter accordingly. These changes are also reflected in the epithets assigned to her throughout her progression. Beginning as a 'Praterhure' or 'Hurengesindel', Rosa ends her career as a prostitute as a 'k.k. Kokotte' or 'Habsburgerhure' (*WP*, p. 426).

By constructing this microcosmic counterpoint to the social structure of *fin-de-siècle* society at large, Faschinger begins a process of satire that continues, in the main, during the framing narrative. It is particularly important to note, for example that the epithets assigned to the various 'grades' of prostitute closely mimic the titles used by both the Lidners and the von Schreyvogls to denote their own, bureaucratically legitimated, rank in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna.

The foregoing analysis suggests that the disciplinary techniques that shape institutions and the subjects who inhabit them also determine the spatial dynamics of the urban environment at large. The density of the partitioning evident in Rosa's account, and the apparent ease with which disciplinary techniques determine and document the location of Vienna's citizens would suggest that the influence of such techniques is insurmountable. With reference to the work of Michel de Certeau, however, it is possible to posit urban walking as a subversive practice that might endow the inhabitant of the 'disciplined city' with a degree of agency.

Certeau's 'Walking in the City' hollows out Foucault's 'utopia of the perfectly governed city'.³³ Taking Foucault's observations as his departure point, Certeau reaches conclusions that stand in stark contrast to those that Foucault proposes in *Discipline and Punish*. While Foucault views the carceral as the logical culmination of panopticism's proliferation in the urban setting, Certeau claims that the 'concept city' of modernist urban planning is entrenched in a process of decay, having fallen victim to its own progress.³⁴ For Certeau, the mechanisms by which the city seeks to administer and rationalize its space

³³ Foucault, *Discipline*, p. 198.

³⁴ Cf., Certeau, *Practice*, p. 95.

proceed from the same source as certain 'everyday practices' that subvert its disciplinary intentions. These techniques cannot be re-interpolated into the carceral fabric because they share with it its condition of possibility, namely space itself.³⁵ In a further modulation of Foucauldian logic, Certeau maintains that urbanism's tendency to privilege teleological progress has caused it to overlook the spatial aspects of the city.³⁶ Chief among the practices that permit panoptic administration of space and bodies to be circumvented is the act of urban walking. Certeau explores anti-disciplinary capacity of this practice by setting up an analogy with the speech act. Both activities, Certeau maintains, are founded on a 'triple enunciative function'.³⁷ Walking constitutes at once

[...] a process of appropriation of the topographical system on the part of the pedestrian [and] a spatial acting-out of the place [that] implies relations among differentiated positions, that is, among pragmatic 'contracts' in the form of movements [...].³⁸

The adumbration of these parallels allows Certeau to characterize walking as a 'space of enunciation',³⁹ whose organizing system is underpinned by a combination of 'forms' and 'rules'.⁴⁰ Just as the speaker has a certain freedom within the boundaries that the rules of the linguistic system impose on his speech acts, so the urban walker is granted freedom in terms of the elements (or forms) of the urban system that he chooses to appropriate, as well as the manner in which he chooses to manipulate them:

[The urban walker] [...] creates discreteness, whether by making choices among the signifiers of the spatial 'language' or by displacing them through the use he makes of them. He condemns certain places to inertia or disappearance and composes with others spatial 'turns of phrase' that are 'rare', 'accidental' or 'illegitimate'.⁴¹

As well as endowing the subject with the ability to select a contingent trajectory through the city, urban walking entails an additional source of agency, which is provided by the subject's ability to choose how to traverse urban space. Expanding the parallels between walking and the speech act,

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 97.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 98.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

Certeau illustrates this point by pointing up the ‘phatic function’ of urban walking, which permits multiple permutations of the urban ‘walk’:

Walking [...] creates [...] a sequence of phatic topoi. [...] The phatic function [...] gambols, goes on all fours, dances, and walks about, with a light or heavy step, like a series of ‘hellos’ in an echoing labyrinth, anterior or parallel to informative speech.⁴²

Certeau maintains that the act of walking goes some way to restoring to the subject the agency of which disciplinary techniques seek to divest it. The walking subject not only has the capacity to appropriate and manipulate the urban system, but is also able to interpolate personal memory, experience and interpretation into the otherwise homogenous fabric of the rational city. Through these ‘multitudinous references and citations’,⁴³ the urban walker is able to ‘spatialize’,⁴⁴ that is to create subjective space that exists in the boundaries prescribed for the subject by disciplinary techniques, and which, more significantly, is masked by these.⁴⁵ A particularly useful demonstration of this process of ‘spatializing’, which will serve as a point of comparison for my discussion of Rosa’s experience of urban space, is identified by J.J. Long in his discussion of W.G. Sebald’s *Die Ringe des Saturn*:

While roaming over the island, [the narrator] invests it with myriad cultural meanings. Metaphor after metaphor is produced in order to articulate the specific embodied experience of place: it resembles a Far-Eastern penal colony and feels extra-territorial or like an undiscovered country. The camouflaged concrete bunkers of the research facility look like the burial mounds of prehistoric rulers while other buildings resemble temples or pagodas. Finally, the narrator abandons the idea that Orfordness is an isle of the dead, and imagines himself ‘amidst the ruins of our own civilization after its extinction in some future catastrophe’.⁴⁶

On initial examination, various aspects of Rosa’s account of walking through Vienna apparently corroborate Certeau’s findings, suggesting that disciplinary techniques are incapable of transgressing the institutional spaces that they variously administer and create. Although the agreements that Rosa reaches with her employers—whether the legally-codified privations of the

⁴² Ibid., p. 99.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 101.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 97.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 101.

⁴⁶ J.J. Long, *W.G. Sebald—Image, Archive, Modernity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), p. 135.

Dienstbotenordnung or the non-juridical agreement reached with Witwe Galli—transform the home of the respective employer into enclosed spaces, they each allow Rosa a certain latitude in terms of her free time and those of her work-related activities that necessarily take place outside the household. At the beginning of Rosa's tenure as a governess in the von Schreyvogel household, for example, she implies that her (admittedly prescribed) walks through the city with the twins are a source of contentment. Rosa also asserts that these walks have allowed her to become 'more familiar' with the city (*WP*, p. 253), suggesting that she is able to plot her own course through the urban environment. Further, Rosa's narration of this activity is, superficially at least, unique in the novel, since the satisfaction she expresses in it does not proceed from her obsessive need to fulfil the legally-codified paradigms of the *Dienstmädchen* role. Predictably, however, the optimism that the reader initially associates with Rosa's description of urban walking is diluted considerably when she expresses a preference for the *Prater*, citing its 'alte Bäume' and 'viele Möglichkeiten zur Zerstreung' as particularly attractive characteristics (*WP*, p. 253). Rosa's preference for the *Prater* points up a flaw in Certeau's findings. Certeau illustrates the quasi-dialectical relationship between rationalized space and urban walking through reference to the role played by 'proper names' in the urban environment. While Foucault cites these 'proper names' as the basis for the segmentation and rationalization of urban space, Certeau sees them as aiding the urban walker by orienting (but not organizing) his trajectories. According to Certeau, these 'proper names' constitute potential sites of 'spatialization', which can be invested with contingent meaning by the individual subject. Hence:

A friend who lives in the city of Sèvres drifts, when he is in Paris, toward the rue des Saints- *Pères* and the rue de *Sèvres*, even though he is going to see his mother in another part of town: these names articulate a sentence that his steps compose without his knowing it. Numbered streets and street numbers (112th St., or 9 rue Saint-Charles) orient the magnetic field of trajectories just as they can haunt dreams.⁴⁷

Rosa's expression of a preference for the *Prater* suggests an experience that is diametrically opposed to that of Certeau's anonymous friend. Whereas

⁴⁷ Certeau, *Practice*, p. 104.

the latter's movements through the city are unintentionally determined by a contextual, contingent attachment to an element of a city that bears a 'proper name' similar to that of his hometown, Rosa's experience suggests that this embodied instance of enactment has been invaded by the disciplinary technique of rational distribution. In stating a preference for a part of the city coded so explicitly as working-class territory, Rosa once more displays preferences that have not only been taken into account by disciplinary techniques, but which form the basis of their ability to rationally distribute Vienna's citizens on the basis of their social rank. It is worth noting that the preference for the *Prater* is shared by Hans Holzer, the waiter whom she meets on her arrival in the city. The fact that Rosa plays unquestioningly into the hands of disciplinarity once more attests to the power of the disciplines to fabricate the subject. Significantly, however, various 'fail-safes' are built into the urban fabric of *fin-de-siècle* Vienna which, working alongside the *Dienstbotenordnung*, simultaneously complement and reinforce the principles of rational distribution, and, in doing so, reduce the subject's ability to circumvent these by appropriating other, counteractive systems. These 'fail-safes' not only interfere with the vector of the subject's trajectory through the city, but also alter the mechanics of its motility. Perhaps the most obvious and structurally simple example is the fact that members of the lower classes do not have the financial means to take advantage of the Viennese public transport system. In Rosa's case at least, this privation proceeds once more from the *Dienstbotenordnung*, which dictates that the level of the *Dienstbote's* pay can be determined by the individual employer. In addition, the fact that Rosa's employers are solely responsible for dictating the tasks that the *Dienstbote* must undertake means that they are able to prescribe both the vector and the dynamics of Rosa's urban trajectories in ways that circumvent the freedoms granted by the system of urban walking. This is best portrayed through the example of Rosa's first shopping expedition for the wife of *Oberpostrat* Lidner. Before she sets out, Rosa is given directions to a specific stall on the *Bauernmarkt* on *Judenplatz* (*WP*, p. 217). In order to be able to find the stall on the basis of these directions, Rosa must enter *Judenplatz* from the *Jordangasse*, rather from either *Drahtgasse*, or even more directly from *Kurrentgasse*. Although Rosa's agency is not

undermined irrevocably by these directions, which leave her free to determine her own trajectory between the Lindner residence on the *Neuer Markt* and *Jordangasse*, they limit the number of trajectories available to her through the dense network of streets in the *Innere Stadt*.

This partially successful attempt to determine the vector of Rosa's urban trajectory is complemented and intensified subsequently by the restriction and determination of her motility while traversing the city. Rosa's return journey from the market is hampered greatly by the goods that she has been required to purchase. Quite apart from the highly symbolic nature of the sack containing potatoes, which is defined by a passer-by as 'eine Last' (*WP*, p. 218), its weight, combined with that of the turkeys, exhausts Rosa, and causes her to pause frequently during her return journey. This passage negates considerably the validity of both Certeau's and Young's pronouncements with reference to comportment and motility. Far from allowing Rosa control over her own motility, and hence the dynamics of her 'pedestrian enunciation', the tasks that she must perform as a result of the provisions of the *Dienstbotenordnung* place her in a position that compromises the contingency of both the vector of her urban trajectory and the mode of her urban walking. Once more, Young's argument for the existence of a feminine corporeality for which the techniques of disciplinarity cannot account is rendered immaterial in Rosa's case, because the specifics of her corporeality are not taken into account when determining the tasks that she is required to complete.

The third locus of agency that Certeau identifies is the walker's ability to interpolate contingent references into the urban landscape. This manoeuvre that allows the subject to 're-inscribe' the rationalized space of disciplinarity by means of its subjective interpretation. Significantly, this assertion causes the focus of Certeau's analysis to shift from the corporeal domain to that of cognition, emulating implicitly Judith Butler's suggestion that the *cogito* constitutes a surface of resistance against disciplinary techniques.⁴⁸ In order to explore these contentions, it is necessary to undertake a psychoanalytically-inflected reading of Rosa's narrative. The need for such analysis is all the more

⁴⁸ Cf. Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

pressing in view of the lack of critical attempts to account for the more idiosyncratic aspects of Rosa's narrative style. Amongst the more problematic characteristics of Rosa's autobiography is the frustrating naivety that is inherent within it, as well as Rosa's consequent eager acceptance of the degrading roles that she occupies during her time in Vienna. In what follows, I show that these idiosyncrasies, far from constituting mere stylistic infelicities, in fact represent by-products not only of the role that the structuring discourses of the *fin de siècle* play in Rosa's initial inauguration as subject, but of their ability to incorporate and instrumentalize mechanisms of potential resistance to their influence.

DISCIPLINING MOTHERS, DISCIPLINING DAUGHTERS.

A conspicuous aspect of Rosa's formative development is the unconventional nature of her relationship with her mother. This manifests itself most obviously in an unusually protracted negative oedipal complex. Mother-daughter relations are thematized frequently in Faschinger's work, and numerous critics have alluded to the role that mother-figures play in the perpetuation of the patriarchal norms that govern the manifestations of (primarily Austrian) society that she portrays in her novels.⁴⁹ Yet references to the role of the mother in the secondary literature that occupies itself with Faschinger's *oeuvre* remain perfunctory at best, so that a thoroughgoing analysis of mother-daughter relationships in her work is left wanting. This is also true of psychoanalytically-inflected readings of Faschinger's novels, despite the author's frequent recourse to such phenomena as the oedipal complex.⁵⁰ Faschinger's attitude toward feminist theory might explain this reluctance. In

⁴⁹ Cf. Ingrid Pfandl-Buchegger, 'Ich reihe die Wörter', p. 13 'Wie Faschinger immer wieder betont, sind es neben den Männern in erster Linie die Mütter, die durch die Erziehung ihrer Töchter und das Vorbild ihres eigenen Verhaltens ihre Loyalität gegenüber dem System demonstrieren. Durch ihre *mütterliche Einflüsterungen* und durch rigide Sanktionen für das Nichtbefolgen der etablierten Regeln sind ihre Töchter nicht nur schlecht beraten, sondern aufgrund der mangelnden Solidarität unter den Frauen verraten'.

⁵⁰ One psychoanalytically-inflected reading of *Magdalena Sünderin* exists, in the form of Anna Hausdorf's 'Aus der Rolle gefallen? Literaturpsychologische Überlegungen zu Lilian Faschingers Roman *Magdalena Sünderin*', in *Bei Gefahr des Untergangs: Phantasien des Aufbrechens* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2000), pp. 307-330)

an interview conducted by Inga Horny, Faschinger declared her lack of interest in feminist writings, and proclaimed her work to be feminist only to the extent that it is authored by a woman.⁵¹ In view of the goals of the present analysis, feminist re-workings of Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis might provide the best route to a comprehensive understanding of the *cogito's* function as a surface of resistance to disciplinary techniques.

The best-known theorization of the connection between mother and child is the *chora*, which Julia Kristeva explores in her reworking of Lacanian theory. As Kaja Silverman suggests, Kristeva's uses of the term *chora* are legion; the term '[functions] at times as synonym for "semiotic disposition", "*significance*" and geno-text, and at other times as a signifier for a moment prior to the mirror stage and the symbolic', but always designates the fusion or confusion of the infant and the maternal body.⁵² Silverman proceeds to posit specific instantiations of the *chora* that differ with regard to the polarity of the relationship that they posit between mother and child. In its initial and best-known interpretation, *chora* refers

[...] simultaneously to the primordial role played by the mother's voice, face and breast, and to the psychic and libidinal conditions of early infantile life. [...] The infant invokes the mother as a source of warmth, nourishments and bodily care by means of various vocal and muscular spasms and the mother's answering sounds and gestures weave a provisional enclosure around the child. That enclosure provides the child with its first, inchoate impressions of space, and with its initial glimmerings of otherness, thereby paving the way for the mirror stage and entry into language. However the *chora* [...] figures the oneness of mother and child.⁵³

This conceptualization of *chora* corresponds with the situation of the non-territorialized subject, which, both prior to and in the months after its birth, 'inhabits' it as a protective enclosure that is provided by the maternal body. Silverman subsequently posits a further formulation of the concept that is to be found in Kristeva's *Revolution in Poetic Language*. Here, the now oedipalized subject internalizes the *chora* in the guise of the libidinal drives:

⁵¹ Inga, *Lilian Faschinger: Freiheitssuche – Eine Grenzüberschreitung* (unpublished master's thesis, University of Graz, 1995).

⁵² Kaja Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror: The Female Voice in Psychoanalysis and Cinema* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988), p. 102.

⁵³ Ibid.

According to the logic of *this* definition, the *chora* is situated *inside* the subject. [...] However, because the mother's body 'mediates the symbolic law organizing social relations', becoming 'the ordering principle of the semiotic *chora*', it would perhaps be more precise to speak of the latter as the subject's internalization of the mother in the guise of a 'mobile receptacle' or provisional enclosure.⁵⁴

The significance of the *chora* for our purposes derives from its capacity to disrupt the Symbolic, which Foucault reconceptualizes in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* as a historically-contingent configuration of power relations.⁵⁵ The invocation of the *chora* is said to reinvigorate the plurivocality of the (specifically maternal) drives, which is stifled by the univocal Symbolic. The mechanisms of the latter cannot fully account for or repress the encroachment of the former due to the temporality of its inception, which occurs prior to the Symbolic. An attempt to translate this into Foucauldian parlance allows the formation of parallels between the Lacanian Symbolic and the Foucauldian 'repressive law', as Judith Butler suggests in her seminal work *Gender Trouble*. As we shall see, however, the circumstances that attend Rosa's own subjectivation show the disruptive potential of the semiotic *chora* to be severely limited.

Rosa's autobiography opens with a two-fold invocation of 'choric fantasy',⁵⁶ which is manifest in the narration of Libussa's body, and the characteristics of the surroundings in which Rosa is brought up. *Marienbad* is dominated by water, an element that consequently figures heavily in Rosa's earliest memories. Water's status as a feminine element is analysed comprehensively by Gaston Bachelard in his *Water and Dreams*, in which an association is purported to obtain between pure, unpolluted water and childhood origins. As Wendy O'Shea-Meddour suggests, these, in turn, carry connotations of natural, pre-cultural, reverie.

The fast-flowing unpolluted stream is not only associated with the purity of the voice of nature, it is also linked to the innocence of the child [...]. Bachelard yearns for a lost state of innocence and finds it most frequently in the stream in

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 103.

⁵⁵ Cf. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York; London: Routledge, 1990), p. 102.

⁵⁶ Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror*, p. 102.

which 'la Nature enfant' speaks. [...] The child is repeatedly revered because he retains closeness with nature, one that is unpolluted by culture.⁵⁷

Water's triadic association with the pre-cultural, childhood origins and the feminine, which O'Shea-Meddour isolates in Bachelard, suggests the marginal presence of psychoanalytic paradigms in the latter's theoretical matrix, which largely duplicates the properties of the *chora* outlined above. This association is cemented further by Rosa's narration of her pre-oedipal relationship with her mother, which, once more, corresponds to the characteristics of the *chora*. At the outset of her narrative, therefore, Rosa is ostensibly afforded two layers of *choric* protection: first by her mother, and second by the idyllic surroundings of a female-dominated *Marienbad*. Subsequently, a third layer of *choric* protection is added in the form of Mary of Lourdes, who functions both for Libussa and for Rosa as an object of veneration. The choice of this incarnation of the Virgin Mary is significant, because it unites the figures of protection, motherhood and femininity that water connotes. Mary of Lourdes is said to have created a spring on the site of her appearance whose water contains miraculous healing properties. But the most significant characteristic with which Mary of Lourdes is associated is that of immaculate motherhood. During her appearances to Bernadette during the seventeenth century, Mary of Lourdes is said to have identified herself specifically as 'the immaculate conception',⁵⁸ a concept that had achieved doctrinal status only four years previously on the basis of Pope Pius IX's bull, *Deus Ineffibilis*. The association between Mary of Lourdes and Rosa's own mother is made explicit on several occasions throughout the latter's childhood narrative, when Rosa relates the existence of physical similarities between Libussa and the small ivory likeness of the Virgin that serves herself and her daughter as totem. A more detailed examination of these symbols of *choric* protection, however, suggests that the validity of this protection in *Marienbad* is limited. As Rosa's childhood narrative progresses, the sources of *choric* protection reveal themselves to have been appropriated by the *fin de*

⁵⁷ Wendy O'Shea Meddour, 'Gaston Bachelard's Water and Dreams', *French Cultural Studies*, 14 (2003), 81-99 (86-87).

⁵⁸ Cf. Jean-Baptiste Estrade, *The Appearances of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the Grotto of Lourdes: Personal Souvenirs of an Eye-Witness*, trans. by J.H. LeBreton-Girdlestone (n.p.: Gayley Press, 2008).

siècle's organizing institutions. The water that flows in *Marienbad* benefits bourgeois 'clients', who, as Rosa suggests are not seriously ill, but have been prescribed a stay at the *Kurort* in order to lose weight. More telling, perhaps, is the fact that the local priest refuses to allow Rosa access to the bottles of Lourdes water that she believes is the only hope of a cure for her mother's illness. Bachelard cites rarity or value as qualities that lead water to 'change gender', rejecting its typically passive state in favour of an active masculinity.⁵⁹ Further, the association between Mary of Lourdes and the Immaculate Conception refers not to the complete absence of the father from the act of procreation, but figures him instead as a form of omnipresence that works through the mother to reproduce his own ideology. Significantly, present absence is a key characteristic of Foucauldian power, which is able to operate only by 'masking a substantial part of itself'.⁶⁰

It is through this figure of present absence that we might understand the function of the *fin de siècle's* founding discourses during Rosa's formative years, as well as beginning to formulate reasons for her subsequent acquiescence to these. The ostensible absence of her father from Rosa's childhood means that her upbringing becomes the responsibility of her mother, in concert with various marginal characters, namely the local priest and her governess, Frau von Rothenhorst. The education that the latter provides is the first manifestation of the father figure's 'present absence' during Rosa's childhood, because it is conferred on Rosa at the behest of Herr Gerstner. The education that Rothenhorst's charges receive aims to secure for them '[eine bürgerliche] Ehe', which is characterized as 'unerlässlich' for the female sex (*WP*, p. 101). Rothenhorst also invokes a notion of female diplomacy according to which women should not only ensure they remain modest with regard to their talents so that their male company is spared the insecurity that might stem from them, but to leave their male interlocutors with the impression that it is they, rather than the women with whom they are speaking, who are in possession of them.

⁵⁹ Cf. Gaston Bachelard, *Water and Dreams: An Essay on the Imagination of Matter* (Dallas: Pegasus, 1983). p.17.

⁶⁰ Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. by Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon, 1978), p. 146.

The conflation of gender and class paradigms that Rothenhorst's rhetoric entails aims in the first place to ensure the 'purity' of the middle class. Rothenhorst's charges are schooled in pursuits whose mastery will increase their allure for middle-class men, to whom, furthermore, they must defer unquestioningly. It is worth noting Rosa's reaction to this facet of her education, which 'brachte [...] [sie] immer ein bißchen aus der Fassung' (*WP*, p. 101). By citing as the singular happiness of 'Mitglieder des weiblichen Geschlechts' the maternity and matrimony that are the corner-stones of a 'bürgerliche Ehe', Rothenhorst excludes members of the lower classes from the paradigm of femininity that underpins the education that she provides. This conflation of social class and gender is buttressed further by the governess's constant allusions to the *Kaiserpaar*, and particularly to *Kaiserin Sisi*, who subsequently becomes the ideal of femininity to which Rosa must conform in order to satisfy her husband's fetish. Initially, though, the *Kaiserin* functions as an idol for Gerstner's (legitimate) daughters.

Gerstner's indirect attempt to mould her subjectivity according to bourgeois paradigms of femininity is rejected by Rosa in favour of the modality of femininity espoused by Libussa and codified in the books on cookery and household management that Rosa reads as a child. This paradigm of femininity replaces the 'acrobatics' of crochet and needlework with that required for the preparation of food, presented in the form of the 'broken-down' task so central to disciplinarity. The centrality of these books to Rosa's and Libussa's identities is intimated at numerous junctures during the narrative, and explains the detailed descriptions of domestic tasks that have been cited as an irregularity of Faschinger's novel. In addition, by identifying with and subsequently emulating her mother, Rosa conforms to the psychoanalytic paradigms of the pre-oedipal stage, reinforcing the conventional connection between mother and child. This identification with the mother, which manifests itself in an unusually protracted negative oedipal complex, functions in concert with a simultaneous rejection of the father that culminates in Rosa's successful attempt to spurn his advances. This rejection of the paternal, and the obfuscation of conventional oedipalization that it entails, is incommensurate with the subsequent extent of Rosa's willing subjection to patriarchal norms. Effectively, Rosa's rejection of

her father suggests that she is able to maintain her pre-oedipal attitude, and therefore that the *choric* protection provided by her mother is allowed to remain intact. Rosa's oedipal trajectory therefore entails an exaggeration and modification of psychoanalytic paradigms, according to which the female subject's pre-oedipal desire for her mother is never replaced completely by an oedipal desire for her father, but is forced instead to enter into conflict with oedipal desires for both father and mother after oedipal triangulation. According to the theories of Helene Deutsch and Ruth Mack Brunswick, the conventionally oedipalized female subject will make a tentative choice in favour of the father, leading to the formation of a super-ego that is less rigid than that of the male subject.⁶¹ In Rosa's case, however, the mother constitutes the child's sole love object; the conventional desire for the father cannot emerge, and thus a conventional female oedipal trajectory proves impossible.

Having eliminated the father as a valid agent of Rosa's inauguration, it would seem sensible to examine the validity of the *choric* protection that Rosa's mother offers her. Following Kristeva, Silverman states that the second incarnation of the *chora* constitutes its internalization in the form of the libidinal drives, but adds subsequently that this internalization might best be understood as that of the mother as a 'mediator' of the symbolic. Silverman's description of the internalized mother figure as 'mediator' divests the *chora* of some of its disruptive properties; but Silverman justifies her description by aligning the second incarnation of the *chora* with its structure in the adult subject. A further layer of complexity is added by Butler's reading of *Motherhood According to Bellini*, which proposes a similar process of maternal internalization as the basis of feminine identity. In this reading, the mother's body is 'internalized as a negation, so that the girl's identity becomes a kind of

⁶¹ Cf. Nancy Chodorow, *Feminism and Psychoanalytic Theory* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), particularly the fourth chapter. A useful introduction to the feminine Oedipus complex is provided by Nancy Koulis and Deanna Holtzmann in their synoptic study *A Story of Her Own: The Female Oedipus Complex Reexamined and Renamed* (Lanham, MD: Jason Aronson, 2008). Marianne Hirsch adopts a psychoanalytical approach to literary manifestations of the mother-daughter relationship in her *The Mother-Daughter Plot: Narrative, Psychoanalysis, Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991). The latter contains a particularly useful introduction which provides brief accounts of the major psychoanalytical approaches to the mother-daughter relationship.

loss, a characteristic privation or lack'.⁶² The disparity between the negativity of this incarnation of the internalized mother and the defensive aspects of the internalized *chora* is difficult to eliminate, constituting a rhetorical conflict that Silverman sees as typical of Kristeva's theory.⁶³ Nevertheless, it is this negativized *chora* that might most readily explain the totality of Rosa's willing subjection to *fin-de-siècle* discourses. In Rosa's case, the internalization of the mother, which occurs as a response to the loss of the primary connection between the subject and the maternal body, is arguably intensified by additional introjections that take place both at the point of, and subsequent to, her mother's death. Much like the three sources of *choric* protection identified above, these internalizations are in fact double-edged. Rosa's subjection to the patriarchal paradigms of the *fin de siècle* proceeds from her adoption of subject positions that are conventionally defined as sites of subversive potential.

Rosa's entry into the convent school precipitates a romantic entanglement with Olga, into which Rosa enters only unwillingly. Subsequently, though, Rosa equates the comfort that she gains from Olga's presence with that provided by her mother, making reference to the sensations adumbrated with reference to Libussa's body at the very beginning of the narrative. This re-narration of a corporeal connection to the mother's body motivated by lesbian desire is indicative simultaneously of one possible melancholic response to the loss of the mother figure and the emergence of a possible avenue of resistance to the machinations of the Symbolic. Kristeva allies the notion of female homosexuality with the reactivation of the initial (libidinal) dependency on the mother, and what she refers to as the 'homosexual maternal facet'.⁶⁴ Because it involves violating both the incest taboo and the taboo surrounding homosexuality, however, lesbianism is rendered culturally unintelligible, and therefore necessarily leads to psychosis. For Kristeva, the only legitimate means of reactivating this original dependency are motherhood and poetic language, of which the latter is the most significant for our purposes. As Kristeva explains,

⁶² Butler, *Gender Trouble*, p. 85.

⁶³ Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror*, p.102.

⁶⁴ This theory was subsequently expanded on by Monique Wittig, who suggested that the lesbian inhabits a realm external to signification. Cf. Monique Wittig, 'One is Not Born a Woman', *Feminist Issues*, vol. 1 (1981), 47-54 (p. 53).

the subversive possibilities of poetic language are located in its alteration of conventional linguistic structures:

In any poetic language, not only do the rhythmic constraints [...] violate certain grammatical rules of a national language [...] but in recent texts, these semiotic constraints (rhythm, vocalic timbres in Symbolist work, but also graphic disposition on the page are accompanied by nonrecoverable syntactic elisions; it is impossible to reconstitute the particular elided syntactic category (object or verb) which makes the meaning of the utterance decidable.⁶⁵

Given Kristeva's suggestion that poetic language harbours subversive potential, it is significant that Rosa's attempts to distance herself from Olga by concentrating on her studies (of female saints) should be interrupted by her entrance into a trance-like state, during which she unwittingly composes an ode to her lover (*WP*, p. 165). The subversive potential of Rosa's unintentional actions increase when read against the background of Kristeva's suggestion that poetic language is particularly dangerous when uttered by women: since it thus repudiates both the incest taboo and the taboo surrounding homosexuality. Much like the loci of *choric* protection cited above, Rosa's invocation of the semiotic through the medium of poetic language is appropriated by the discourses that it purports to threaten. The discovery of Rosa's *Ode* provides the convent-school's functionaries with evidence of the relationship between Rosa and Olga, a development that leads Olga to commit suicide (*WP*, p. 174). As a result of Rosa's rebellion then, the representative of two 'counter-discourses', surrounding both religion and sexuality, is eliminated.

With reference to Rosa's own developmental trajectory, meanwhile, it might be argued that the loss of Olga precipitates a further introjection of the maternal body for which Olga's had functioned as substitute. Most important for our purposes, however, is the similarity in the nature of the relationship that Rosa entertained with both characters. Rosa's constant idealization of her mother during her formative years is brought to an end when Libussa reveals the exact circumstances of her daughter's birth, and is thus exposed, in Rosa's eyes, as a liar and a hypocrite. This ambivalence resurfaces in Olga's case as a result of Rosa's unwilling attraction to her, which is incompatible with the fact that Olga embodies values that are so incommensurate with her own. In Rosa's

⁶⁵ Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language*, ed. by Leon S. Roudiez, trans. by Thomas Gorz and others (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), p. 134.

case, therefore, a three-fold melancholic identification with the mother figure occurs that engenders a correspondingly intense mode of self-hatred. Rosa's pronounced tendency toward self-loathing in turn provides the necessary conditions for the masochistic joy in degradation that she displays. Freud's original analysis of melancholia includes amongst its symptoms a tendency towards self-denigration, the reproaches originating from which are in fact aimed at the lost object rather than constituting the self-abasement of the subject. Hence, far from constituting a possible locus of rebellion against the patriarchal structures and strictures of the Viennese *fin de siècle*, Rosa's unconventional, female-dominated developmental trajectory might be said to constitute the main reason for her naïve willingness to conform.

In the narration of Rosa's formative development, therefore, Faschinger makes use of various techniques and figures that would conventionally provide methods of circumventing disciplinary techniques, only to simultaneously foreclose these. Thus, the narration of Rosa's formative development attests to the ability of the disciplines to re-appropriate potential methods of resistance into the service of their perpetuation. As will be illustrated in the following section, a similar dynamic is visible at the level of narrative form. Despite the apparently subversive nature of Rosa's attempt to re-modulate the dynamics of the confession narrative, the discourse which is ultimately applied to her autobiography allows its effortless re-interpolation into the fabric of disciplinarity. Furthermore, the fact that Rosa writes her biography while imprisoned in the *Mörderzelle* of the *Landesgericht* is particularly significant with regard to the nature of the urban space projected in the narrative itself.

CONFESSION AND CARCERAL

Traditionally, critics dealing with *Wiener Passion* have cited the formal aspects of Rosa's narrative as the most potent locus of subversion in the novel. The most convincing study in this regard is perhaps that of Ellie Kennedy. Her comparative analysis of *Wiener Passion* and *Magdalena Sünderin* applies the performative theory formulated by Judith Butler as its theoretical framework. Kennedy's approach allows her to characterize Rosa's attempt at self-re-

narration as a successful ‘identity performance’ that allows the narrator to elude her discursive construction successfully. Following Butler, Kennedy attributes the success of Rosa’s ‘identity performative’ to its positive effect on the embedded reader, Magnolia Brown, as well as its success in revealing the ‘constructed nature’ of Rosa’s identity. Kennedy’s theoretical framework, which leads her to overlook the problematic nature of the prison as *Erzählort*, combined with the limitations arising from her comparative approach, leads her to overestimate the success of the narrative as an instance of specifically performative subversion.

The heightened subversive potential of Rosa’s tale proceeds from its replication at the level of form of two closely-related genres that are described in Foucault’s *oeuvre*. Despite the possible risks associated with conflating these genres, an analysis of Foucauldian confession, the dynamics of which are set out in the main in the first volume of his *History of Sexuality* and the article ‘The Subject and Power’, reveals its close affinity to the role of biography in the production of the subject.⁶⁶ Biography is particularly relevant in the context of this chapter, because the conclusion of *Discipline and Punish* makes reference to the genre’s implications for the production of the delinquent in the carceral system. The application to the formal aspects of Rosa’s narrative of the Foucauldian approach to biography and confession provides an interpretation of Rosa’s narrative that undercuts its supposedly subversive potential, constituting it merely as the final stage in Rosa’s iterative production by discourse.

According to Foucault, the introduction of the penitentiary system was consonant with the emergence of the delinquent as a concept. Aside from the surveillance that was central to the function of the panopticon, the penitentiary system required the systematic collection and refinement of the offenders’ biographical information. Such biographical investigations encompassed

⁶⁶ Michel Foucault, ‘The Subject and Power’, *Critical Inquiry*, 8 (1982), 777-795. Susannah Radstone alludes to a tendency amongst literary critics to allow confession narrative to be subjoined by biographical writing. In Radstone’s opinion, this process ‘elides confessional literature’s relations with the confessional mode’s wider cultural resonance and reach’. Cf. Susannah Radstone, *The Sexual Politics of Time* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 26.

‘psychology, social position and upbringing’,⁶⁷ and were conducted ‘in order to discover the dangerous proclivities of the first, the harmful predispositions of the second and the bad antecedents of the third’.⁶⁸ Based on this information, it was possible to develop a ‘systematic typology of the delinquent’,⁶⁹ which permitted the individualization of the punishment not only on the basis of the crime committed, but, more importantly according to the biographical factors that produced the crime initially. Through its insertion into the omni-disciplinarity of the penitentiary, the body of the prisoner becomes ‘duplicated by the individuality of the delinquent, by the little soul of the criminal which the very apparatus of punishment fabricated as a point of application of the power to punish and as the object of [...] penitentiary science’.⁷⁰ The offender’s biographical information facilitates the construction of an individualized paradigm of delinquency that will determine the specifics of the prisoner’s punishment. Seen in this light, Foucault’s suggestion that the prisoner become the ‘principle of his own subjection’ becomes less opaque.⁷¹ In the case of the delinquent, biographical factors come to determine the specific modality of punishment to which the prisoner is subjected.

The processes of Foucauldian confession as outlined in *The History of Sexuality* and ‘The Subject and Power’ replicate those that are visible in the utilization of the criminal’s biography in his production as a delinquent. The biographical narrative, which is pieced together through investigations undertaken by the authorities, is categorized through the application of the appropriate discourse of delinquency, through its insertion into the classificatory system of criminology. The application of ‘scientific’ discourse to a subjective narrative is a key characteristic of Foucauldian confession. According to Foucault, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the proliferation of situations and relationships governed by the dynamics of confession, as a consequence of which the confession itself became divested of its exclusively

⁶⁷ Foucault, *Discipline*, p. 252.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 253.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 254-255.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 203.

ritualistic and pastoral character and widened its sphere of influence accordingly.

[Confession] has been employed on a whole series of relationships: children and parents, students and educators, patients and psychiatrists, delinquents and experts. The motivations and effects it is expected to produce have varied, as have the forms it has taken: interrogations, consultations, autobiographical narratives, letters; they have been recorded, transcribed, assembled into dossiers, published, and commented on.⁷²

Hepworth and Turner identify several manifestations of the confession in Foucault's *oeuvre*.⁷³ The first, which is formulated in *Discipline and Punish*, and in Foucault's Foreword to *I, Pierre Riviere*,⁷⁴ illustrates the centrality of the confession to the legitimation of sovereign power, and hence to social control during the *Ancien Regime*. The second, delineated in the main in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* and the 'The Subject and Power', posits confession as instrumental in the production of the 'truth' of the subject. Foucault sees confession as operating in a power dynamic, involving the presence, whether real or assumed, of an authority that 'requires the confession, prescribes and appreciates it, and intervenes in order to judge, punish, forgive, console and reconcile'.⁷⁵ The information gleaned through the act of confession allows the holder of what Foucault terms 'pastoral power' to impose on the subject an authoritative discourse that is produced and refined by the intimate knowledge with which the relationship of confessor and confessant endows the former. The 'truth' of this discourse, moreover, is 'corroborated by the obstacles and resistances' which the confessant has had to surmount in order to produce the confession itself.⁷⁶ Closer examination of these 'modalities' of the confession, however, reveal that Hepworth and Turner's attempt to differentiate between the two is misleading. They posit as the most significant characteristic of the modality of confession emanating from *Discipline and Punish* its ability to force the subject to 'speak against themselves' and 'for the law', thus '[confirming] the

⁷² Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 62.

⁷³ Cf. Mike Hepworth and Brian S. Turner, *Confession: Studies in Deviance and Religion* (London: Routledge, 1982), particularly pp. 85-108.

⁷⁴ Michel Foucault, 'Foreword', in *I Pierre Riviere, Having Slaughtered my Mother, my Sister and my Brother: A Case of Parricide in the 19th Century*, ed. by Michel Foucault (London: Penguin, 1978), pp. vii-xiv.

⁷⁵ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 61

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

written truth of the legal process with the written word of the accused'.⁷⁷ As 'the free utterance of an author confirming the written discourse of the law', however, the confession also 'has the effect of excluding [the accused] from the realm of morality and legality'.⁷⁸ Thus, while the confession from the gallows legitimated the authority of the sovereign, it also allowed the imposition of a legitimated 'truth' on the subject, constituting it variously (and at times simultaneously) as immoral, criminal, or other, and thus legitimating the treatment deemed appropriate by the authority receiving the confession. It is worth noting that each of the aforementioned modalities of confession differ in terms of the moment and motivation of production. Whereas confession in *Discipline and Punish* becomes a juridical obligation which must be violently extracted, the later variant of confession is rendered all the more repressive as a result of the purportedly voluntary nature of its production by the confessing subject, the capacity to liberate with which it is imputed, and the subject's related ignorance of its role as perhaps the most significant conduit of power-knowledge available to Western society:

The obligation to confess is now relayed through so many different points [...] that we no longer perceive it as the effect of a power that constrains; on the contrary, it seems to us that truth, lodged in our most secret nature, 'demands' only to surface; that if it fails to do so, this is because a constraint holds it in place, the violence of power weighs it down. [...] Confession frees; power reduces one to silence.⁷⁹

Taken together, the foregoing observations might be appropriated to corroborate a reading of Rosa's narrative which is much more ambivalent with regard to its subversive characteristics than Kennedy's study suggests. Whereas the latter correctly identifies in Rosa's autobiography an 'inversion' of the confession narrative, her analysis characterizes this merely as a further indication of the novel's adherence to the generic conventions of the picaresque. Furthermore, Kennedy's understanding of the performative potential of the

⁷⁷ Hepworth and Turner, *Confession*, p. 92.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Foucault, *Sexuality*, p.30. The Foucauldian approach to confession has been the object of analysis by representatives of numerous disciplines. Hepworth and Turner are referenced here because their schematic approach and consideration of the sociological and criminological implications of Foucauldian confession lends itself well to the present analysis. A useful critical approach to the status of confession in relation to Foucault's work on religion can be found in Jeremy R. Carrette, *Foucault and Religion* (London: Routledge, 1999), particularly Chapter Two, pp. 25-44.

confession narrative is predicated solely on the misappropriation of critical material relating exclusively to *Magdalena Sünderin*, namely Geoffrey Howes's 'Therapeutic Murder in Elfriede Czurda and Lilian Faschinger'. Howes states:

Literary confession [...] is [...] the insertion of a voice where there was none before. [...] Through this voice, we can see that the killing was an attempt at self-therapy, however misguided, violent or desperate. Through confession [...] this self-constitution becomes evident.⁸⁰

Whereas Kennedy reads the above quotation as Howes's attempt—'without actually using the word'—to '[show] [...] to what extent confessional narrative can be performative',⁸¹ a more compelling interpretation of the quotation would constitute Howes's understanding of confession as the method by which the potential for the act of murder to reconstitute the murderer as subject becomes apparent. Hence, while Kennedy is correct to identify the performative potential of Rosa's narrative, the subjective nature of the theoretical foundations she provides for this assertion necessitates a re-evaluation of the relationship between that narrative and the confessional—and indeed biographical—mode.

An attempt to map onto Rosa's narrative Foucault's pronouncements concerning both the confession and the biography produces a far more ambivalent interpretation than that provided by Kennedy. Rosa's decision to pen her autobiography in fact recapitulates the process by means of which the delinquent would have been produced. In keeping with Foucauldian convention regarding both the confession and the biography, Rosa's narrative is received and censored by a member of the *Schwestern zum guten Hirten*, who imposes on both the narrative, and on Rosa herself, a particular authoritative discourse that aims to defuse the narrative's potentially incendiary content, and thus to re-interpolate it into the mechanisms of disciplinarity. Hence, Rosa's narrative provides the means for her classification by the authorities that govern the *fin de siècle*, which constitute her as sinner, and thus as irrevocably other. By producing a narrative, therefore, Rosa undergoes precisely the transformation that Foucault ascribes to the prisoner in the penitentiary system. Whereas the

⁸⁰ Geoffrey C. Howes, 'Therapeutic Murder in Elfriede Czurda and Lilian Faschinger', *Modern Austrian Literature*, 32 (1999), 79-91 (p. 90).

⁸¹ Kennedy, 'Genre Trouble', p. 85.

prisoner's body is duplicated by the delinquent as a biographical entity, however, Rosa's becomes duplicated by the biography of the sinner.

Mögen die wohl in jeder gottesfürchtigen Seele gleichzeitig Abscheu und Mitleid erregenden Erinnerungen dieser einerseits beklagenswerten, andererseits über die Maßen verstockten Sünderin denjenigen unter den jungen Frauen der Mitte dieses Jahrhunderts, die sich nicht stark genug fühlen, die mannigfaltigen Versuchungen unserer Tage energisch von sich zu weisen, in Augenblicken zur Mahnung dienen, da sie geneigt sind, den arglistigen Einflüsterungen Beelzebubs [...] ihr Ohr zu leihen. Gelänge es diesem Bericht einer Fehlgeleiteten, auch nur eine einzige Leserin zu einem gottgefälligeren Leben zu bewegen, es wäre mein schönster Lohn. (WP, p. 86)

The application of religious discourse to Rosa's autobiography once more removes the author's agency, altering the intended purpose of the narrative and transforming it into a conduit of power-knowledge that is intended to uphold, rather than to undermine, the social structure of the *fin de siècle*. Hence, the original goal of the narrative—to warn of the dangers of unconditional obedience, and to discourage other women from following the same path—is circumvented. Despite Kennedy's suggestions to the contrary, the narrative's subversive potential fails once again to be realized when it falls into the hands of Magnolia Brown. Although her perusal of Rosa's autobiography engenders feelings of solidarity in Magnolia, its ultimate effect, as we shall see, is to cast Rosa's great-granddaughter into a set of power-relations that ultimately proves no less demeaning than those to which Rosa is subject.

The form of Rosa's autobiography, and its genesis from within the confines of the prison, has further implications for an objective assessment of its subversive potential. In order to assess the significance of these, it is necessary to begin from the premise that two subjects, rather than one, proceed from Rosa's narrative: on the one hand, the narrated Rosa, a conventional autobiographical subject, and on the other the particular modality of Vienna to which Rosa herself is exposed. The relationship between these two subjects simultaneously formalizes and complicates the reciprocity between the body and the city proposed by Elizabeth Grosz. The latter sees the city as a reflection of the 'productive potential of human corporeality', whereas the city constitutes the stage for the body's 'cultural saturation'.⁸² Rather than reflecting directly the

⁸² Grosz, *Space, Time and Perversion*, p. 105.

productive possibilities of Rosa's body, however, the city created through the medium of narrative is a product of her subjectivity, constituting a contingent account of the specific 'modality' of Viennese urban space to which she is exposed. In this case, therefore, the role of the body, while integral to the narrative construction of the city, is mediated through the reciprocal relationship between the body and consciousness on which the narration of a subjective interpretation of the city must necessarily be predicated. In *Wiener Passion*, this relationship is connected intimately with the issue of motility through the prolix descriptions of Rosa's urban trajectory which, as we shall see, are replicated by both Magnolia and Josef in the *Rahmenerzählung*. The traversal of the body through the urban environment, and the injunctions, privations, and permissions to which such traversal is subject, play a fundamental role in the narrative construction of the city. The specific areas of the city to which the narrating subject is accorded access, along with the specific mode and speed of its traversal between institutions, define the topographical parameters of the narrated configuration of Vienna that is constructed in the novel. Reading *Wiener Passion* in this way illustrates the novel's corroboration of a further aspect of Grosz's observations, namely her injunction against the subordination of the body to a subjectivity exclusively located in what she defines as a 'self-given consciousness'.⁸³ Maurice Merleau-Ponty goes some way to corroborating Grosz's opinion in his *Phenomenology of Perception*, in which he states that the unity of an object cannot be perceived 'without the mediation of bodily experience'. Merleau-Ponty suggests '[o]ur own body is in the world as the heart is in the organism. It keeps the visible spectacle constantly alive, and with it forms a system'.⁸⁴

Considered in abstraction, Merleau-Ponty's observations are of restricted import in the context of the current investigation because of the caveat that restricts the 'system' operative between the body and its surroundings to one based purely on 'visual spectacle'. Although 'spectacle' itself is of central importance in the analysis of the urban environment, as

⁸³ Elizabeth Grosz, *Space, Time and Perversion: Essays in the Politics of Bodies* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 105.

⁸⁴ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 203.

theorists such as Walter Benjamin and Guy Debord have shown,⁸⁵ none of the third-person narratives that comprise *Wiener Passion* explore the narrator's reactions to purely visual phenomena. It is, however, possible to amplify the resonance of Merleau-Ponty's observations through reference to Young's research. 'Throwing Like a Girl' elucidates a specific cultural system that limits the capabilities and intentionality of women's bodies, and is compared throughout the essay to a notional normative system that governs the interaction between masculine corporeality and the environment. As we have seen, the influence of the institutions and the disciplinary techniques that organize them is highly pervasive in Rosa's case. Both her corporeality and her consciousness are structured and manipulated by the discourses to which she must adhere. In view of Merleau-Ponty's assertions, and their corroboration by Young, therefore, it is possible to suggest that the formation of a 'system' between the subject and their surroundings occurs in Rosa's narrative because of the influence of the discourses and the disciplinary techniques that underpin them. As a result, it is possible to suggest that Rosa's autobiography attests not only to the pervasive influence of the disciplines, but also proposes a model of disciplinarity that builds on, and hence moves beyond, the foundations provided by Foucault. Whereas Foucault sees the relationship between these two entities as one-dimensional, citing the disciplines as influencing the body through the creation of disciplinary space, Rosa's narrative can be read as a testament to the ability of the disciplines to transform the subject itself into a conduit of disciplinary power, extending their influence beyond specifically institutional environment by exploiting the capacity of the subject to produce their own space. In penning her autobiography while awaiting execution in prison, therefore, Rosa not only perpetuates, but also amplifies the influence of the disciplines, placing herself, and with her the prison, as the epicentre of disciplinary practices from which the power of the disciplines to subjectivate ultimately emanates. In short, Rosa's narrative completes the transformation from the rationalized city of panopticism to the carceral which, according to Foucault, constitutes the final modulation of disciplinary space.

⁸⁵ Cf. Guy de Bord, *The Society of the Spectacle* (Detroit: Black and Red Publishing, 1984) and Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. by

Having identified and explored the disciplinary techniques by means of which bodies in Faschinger's *fin-de-siècle* are simultaneously produced and subjected, it remains to examine the extent and influence of similar techniques in the present-day city as narrated variously by Magnolia Brown and Josef Horvath. Hitherto, critics' treatment of *Wiener Passion's* framing narrative has been limited to explorations of the analogous attitude displayed by the inhabitants of both present-day and *fin-de-siècle* Vienna towards female protagonists who fall outside the prevalent paradigms of race and femininity. Thus, Kecht and Kennedy agree that Magnolia functions to illustrate the survival of the repressive and exclusionary social norms visible in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna in the present day city. Kecht suggests '[d]ie weitverbreitete Akzeptanz dieser Verhältnisse und die Perpetuierung dieser gottgewollten Ordnung, zu deren Aufrechterhaltung [...] Frauen [...] aktiv beitragen sind—wie Faschinger suggeriert—mit der Habsburger Monarchie nicht verschwunden',⁸⁶ whereas Kennedy characterizes the existence of parallels between Rosa's and Magnolia's experiences as indicative of continuities rather than improvements. The major drawback inherent in each of these readings lies in their tendency toward generalization, with each critic postulating implicitly the unproblematic preservation of the social structure of the *fin-de-siècle* configuration of Viennese culture in the socio-cultural context of late 1990s Vienna. Kennedy's rhetoric is particularly problematic in this regard: Her creation of a dichotomy of continuity and improvement points to a major omission in her own reading, obviating the need for consideration of the differences inherent in the socio-cultural dynamics of the two environments. The universalizing effect of both critics' almost exclusive attention to the parallels between the two socio-cultural configurations of Viennese society in *Wiener Passion* is incompatible with a reading of the novel that takes the relationship between corporeality and disciplinarity as its starting point. The reason for this incompatibility is to be found in Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, in which the concept of the *episteme* is first formulated. Foucault defines the *episteme* as

⁸⁶ Maria Regina Kecht, "'Geschichten [...] aus der Truhe holen': Macht und Ohnmacht in *Wiener Passion*", *Script*, 19 (2001), 24-31 (p. 31).

[...] the total set of relations that unite, at a given period, the discursive practices that give rise to epistemological figures, sciences, and possibly formalized systems; the way in which, in each of these discursive formations, the transitions to epistemologization, scientificity, and formalization are situated and operate; the distribution of these thresholds, which may coincide, be subordinated to one another, or be separated by shifts in time; the lateral relations that may exist between epistemological figures or sciences in so far as they belong to neighbouring, but distinct, discursive practices.⁸⁷

A key characteristic of the *episteme* for our purposes is its spatiotemporal contingency. Foucault warns against conceptualizing it as '[...] a motionless figure that appeared one day with the mission of effacing all that preceded it [...]', preferring to define it as 'a constantly moving set of articulations, shifts, and coincidences that are established, only to give rise to others'.⁸⁸ Since Foucault's definition of the *episteme* includes discursive formations in its scope, it is logical to assume that the *episteme's* chronological progression and modification will entail a similar adjustment to the discursive formations that it underpins. In turn, these adjustments necessarily lead to an alteration in the structure of those existing disciplinary techniques designed to perpetuate and reinforce the discursive constructions through their inscription on the corporeality of the subject. Alongside the extant techniques, however, the gradual alteration of the *episteme* requires the on-going development of new disciplinary mechanisms, conduits of power-knowledge and cultural institutions that are appropriated into the service of newly emergent fields of power relations. A paradigmatic example of this proceeds from the canon of feminist responses to Foucault, which emerged at the beginning of the 1970s. The following quotation, taken from Sandra Bartky's 'Foucault, Femininity and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power', attests to the proliferation of disciplinary techniques that occurred as a consequence of the alteration of paradigms of femininity as a result of increased liberation:

As modern industrial societies change and women themselves offer resistance to patriarchy, older forms of domination are eroded. But new forms arise, spread and become consolidated. Women are no longer required to be chaste or modest, or to restrict their sphere of activity to the home, or even to realise their properly feminine destiny in maternity. Normative femininity is becoming more and more centred on woman's body—not its duties and obligations, or

⁸⁷ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 211.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

even its capacity to bear children, but its sexuality, more precisely its presumed heterosexuality and its appearance. [...] What is new is the growing power of the image in a society increasingly oriented toward the visual media. Images of normative femininity [...] have replaced the religiously oriented tracts of the past. New too is the spread of this discipline to all classes of women and its deployment throughout the life cycle. [...] To subject oneself to the new disciplinary power is to be up-to-date, to be 'with it'.⁸⁹

Foucault's insistence on the cultural contingency of the *episteme* and Bartky's identification of modernized disciplinary techniques serve to concretise the major failing that has attended readings of *Wiener Passion* to date. By isolating and elucidating the parallels between the Vienna of the present day and that of the *fin de siècle*, critics have provided only half the story, failing to take into account the changes in the underlying structures of disciplinarity necessary to reproduce the *status quo* of the *fin de siècle* in the cultural context of 1990s Vienna. Of further note in this regard is the tendency displayed by critics to apply a conventional 'Zwei-Ort Schema' to the novel's topography, excluding from their analyses the cultural conditions and norms prevalent in the 1990s New York from which *Magnolia* originates.⁹⁰ The one exception to this is Josef W. Moser's paper entitled 'Austrian and American Ethnic Diversity in Lilian Faschinger's *Wiener Passion*'. The paper explores the parallels between the New York of the present day and the Vienna of both the nineteenth and twentieth-century *fin de siècle*, and posits as the main link between the three cities their common status as 'melting pots of ethnic difference'.⁹¹ Aside from the largely positive connotations of the epithet 'melting pot', which do not sit well with the overwhelmingly negative portrayal of contemporary Viennese society with which Faschinger presents her reader, Moser falls prey to the shortcomings present in Kennedy and Kecht's research, concentrating exclusively on the parallels that are evident on comparison of the main female protagonists' experiences in the Vienna in which they find themselves. In spite of the specific reference to America in the title of Moser's

⁸⁹ Sandra L. Bartky, 'Foucault, Femininity and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power', in *Foucault and Feminism: Reflections on Resistance*, ed. by Irene Diamond and Lee Quimby (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1987), pp. 93-111 (p. 107).

⁹⁰ Norbert Mecklenburg, *Erzählte Provinz: Regionalismus und Moderne im Roman* (Königstein/Taunus: Athenäum, 1986), p. 34.

⁹¹ Josef W. Moser, 'Austrian and American Ethnic Diversity in Lilian Faschinger's *Wiener Passion*', *TRANS*, 17 (November 2008), <http://www.inst.at/trans/17Nr/1-11/1-11_moser17.htm> [Accessed 20 July 2009], para. 18.

article, Faschinger's representation of the cultural dynamics prevalent in New York is referred to only fleetingly. In what follows, therefore, an attempt will be made to expose the underlying structure of power-relations prevalent in both present-day Vienna and present-day New York. First, it will be argued that the traditional, institutionally-based mode of spatial rationalization that provided the basis of disciplinarity in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna has broken down in the contemporary city, to be replaced by a modernized form of disciplinarity to which both of the major protagonists of the frame narrative fall victim.

'DAS GOLDENE WIENER HERZ': FASCHINGER'S CONTEMPORARY VIENNA

Unique amongst the three narratives in terms of the tone they adopt, the sections of *Wiener Passion* narrated by Josef Horvath deliver what is in effect a two-fold parody. On the one hand, Faschinger combines in Josef's character several exaggerated manifestations of the more negative stereotypes associated with the present-day Viennese. Among these is Horvath's obsession with death, which is manifest most obviously in his decision to rent an apartment in the building in which Schubert died, referred to throughout the novel as 'Das Sterbehaus'. It is also reinforced by his listing of Vienna's cemeteries amongst 'die Örtlichkeiten, die ich in Wien am meisten schätze' (*WP*, p. 128). This is complemented by a tendency to melancholic depression and a certain *Präpotenz*, which has been cited as a key characteristic of the typical Viennese citizen.⁹² Perhaps more importantly, however, Josef continues to be enmeshed in a culture which has its roots in the *fin-de-siècle*; aside from his exaggerated veneration of the composer Franz Schubert, Josef is also a former *Sängerknabe* and music teacher who, at various points in the novel, bemoans the decline of the traditional cultural institutions associated with the *Gründerzeit*. More importantly, however, Josef's character, his focalization of Vienna and his trajectory through the city each constitute humorous parodies of elements of Rosa's narrative. Whereas the latter narrative conceptualization of the city attests to the crushing extent of the institution's ability to manipulate and

⁹² Ernst Bruckmüller, 'Wien und die österreichische Nationalidentität' in *Von den Hauptstädtern und den Hintersassen: Wien als Bundeshauptstadt*, ed. by Erhard Busek (Vienna: Edition Atelier, 1987), pp. 19-36 (p.22).

control both urban space and the urban subject, the effect of the former is the exact opposite. Josef's narrative attests to the abject failure of such institutions to govern the contemporary city. In Josef's narrative, the dynamics of rationalised disciplinarity are self-consciously repeated, but in contexts that betray their lack of relevance in a contemporary age. Thus, both the modern-day manifestations of the institutions which organize Rosa's Vienna, and the disciplinary mechanics of that organization become sources of humour for the reader. Particularly significant in this regard are the two encounters with Viennese bureaucracy that Josef relates during the initial sections of his narrative. The more bizarre of these relates to his attempt to secure a grave for his mother, with whom, even in death, he maintains a conspicuously oedipal relationship, whose dynamics parody the relationship between Rosa and Libussa. From Josef's correspondence with the authorities at the *Zentralfriedhof* proceeds a bizarre repetition of the dynamics of disciplinary space. Aside from the categorization of graves into 'Ehrengräber, 'gewidmet[e] Gräber' and 'ehrenhalber gewidmet[e] Gräber', the sections of the cemetery are apparently classified according to the calibre of the personalities interned in them:

Die Mitglieder des Ehrungsrates hätten entschieden, dass die Wertschätzung, die ein hinterbliebener Sohn der musikalischen Begabung seiner verstorbenen Mutter entgegenbringe, zwar verständlich und rührend sei, jedoch [...] keinesfalls genug Gewicht besäße, um eine Beisetzung des Heimgegangenen im Ehrengräberhain beziehungsweise in einer der beiden großen Abteilungen der Ehrengräber, nämlich den Gruppen Vierzehn A und Vierzehn C, Zweiunddreißig A und Zweiunddreißig C, zu rechtfertigen.⁹³

Further manifestations of disciplinary space are evident in Josef's account of his attempts to secure an apartment in Schubert's *Sterbehaus*. His encounter with the official responsible takes place in the 'Wohnungsberatungsstelle für den fünften Wiener Gemeindebezirk, Schönbrunnerstraße vierundfünfzig, zweiter Stock Tür achtzehn' (*WP*, p. 23). Despite its brevity, the connotations of this overly pedantic designation are legion. Most obviously, it constitutes a reference to the rationalization of space which is both characteristic of the

⁹³ As the results of a search in the online 'Grabsuche' facility provided by the *Wiener Magistrat* suggest, this system of categorization goes even further than betrayed in Horvath's correspondence. Every grave at the *Zentralfriedhof* are assigned a designation which incorporates its 'Abteilung', 'Gruppe', 'Rang' and 'Nummer', and which therefore allows its precise location to be pinpointed.

Cf. <<https://www.wien.gv.at/grabauskunft/internet/suche.aspx/>> [Accessed 20 July 2009]

modernist urban planning paradigm and the foundational precept of Foucault's 'perfectly governed city'. In this instance, however, the connotations of disciplinarity otherwise associated with this mode of rationalization are lost, with the mechanics of disciplinary space being turned on the Viennese authorities and becoming the means by which the pedantry of modern-day Viennese bureaucracy is exposed. Ensuing events take this dynamic even further, with the mechanics of subject formation becoming the object of increasingly amusing parody. The official in charge informs Josef that the apartment he wishes to live in can only be inhabited by those who fulfil certain 'Auslese Kriterien', namely an ability to prove that their current living situation has brought about illness. Josef's further probing, however, reveals that the regulations governing the distribution of *Gemeindewohnungen* require applicants to display specific symptoms before their request can be considered.

[...] die einzige Möglichkeit bestehe im Nachweis einer feuchten Kellerwohnung beziehungsweise einer von der Wohnung getrennten, sich auf dem Gang befindlichen Toilette und eines mit diesen Gegebenheiten in unmittelbarer Beziehung stehenden schweren Gelenksrheumas. (WP, p. 23)

After consultation with his mother, Josef moves into a basement apartment in the twelfth district, and notes with contentment the hurried onset of the required symptoms, which eventually lead to bursitis, and the approval that the official shows with his resultant state of health (WP, p. 26).

Of the three protagonists, Magnolia's relationship with Viennese urban space—and indeed with space in general—is perhaps the most inconsistent. Whilst Josef's narrative begins with an explanation of the negative effect of his surroundings on his sickly constitution, illustrated through reference to his everyday wanderings through the city, Magnolia's first narration of urban space, namely that of New York city, juxtaposes a narrative from 'ground level' with that of New York as viewed from the window of her aeroplane, emulating the totalizing vision of the city to which modern planners aspired. The 'erotics of knowledge' the proceed from the totalizing gaze are alluded to by Certeau during the introductory section of 'Walking in the City', where the ability to view the city in its entirety is presented as endowing the elevated spectator of the urban text with a form of deific supremacy.

To be lifted to the summit of the World Trade Center is to be lifted out of the city's grasp. [...] When one goes up there, he leaves behind the mass that carries

off and mixes up in itself any identity of authors or spectators. An Icarus flying above these waters, he can ignore the devices of Daedalus in mobile and endless labyrinths far below. His elevation transfigures him into a voyeur. It puts him at a distance. It transforms the bewitching world by which one was 'possessed' into a text that lies before one's eyes. It allows one to read it, to be a solar Eye, looking down like a god.⁹⁴

Of significance here is Certeau's recourse to the rhetoric of panopticism. For him, to be lifted above the city causes the self-policing influence of the panopticon to be alleviated, effecting the temporary reversal of the relationship between the city and the subject by subordinating the former to the gaze of the latter. A further layer of complexity is produced by the particular dynamics of the space that Magnolia's elevation above the city enables her to narrate. Whereas the gender of de Certeau's voyeur-god is indeterminate, the gaze of modernist urban planning that it possesses is traditionally coded as masculine.⁹⁵ By adopting the totalizing gaze of the modernist planner, then, Magnolia not only reverses the polarity of traditional subject/object relations, subjecting the city to her own scrutiny, but also obviates traditional gender roles by assuming a typically masculine perspective.

Two possible readings proceed from Magnolia's first narrated encounter with urban space. The fact that it incorporates an element of detachment from the disciplinary 'devices of Daedalus' operative in the ground-level urban reality of twentieth-century New York might on the one hand be seen as an indicator of a more developed ability to resist these devices. Certeau's subsequent observations regarding the panorama city, on the other hand, suggest such optimism to be invalid. Certeau maintains that the totalizing image of the city is no more than a temporary fiction that affords momentary relief from the influence of urban disciplinarity by allowing the subject to remove themselves physically from the reality that it underpins.

The panorama-city is a 'theoretical' (that is, visual) simulacrum, in short a picture, whose condition of possibility is an oblivion and a misunderstanding of practices. The voyeur-god created by this fiction, who, like Schreber's God,

⁹⁴ Certeau, *Practice*, p. 91.

⁹⁵ Cf. Antony Vidler, 'Bodies in Space, Subjects in the City', in particular his description of le Corbusier's ineffable space, viewed initially from a perspective analogous to that adopted by Magnolia at this stage in her narration.

knows only cadavers, must disentangle himself from the murky intertwining daily behaviors and make himself alien to them.⁹⁶

As the majority of critical analyses of Magnolia's role in *Wiener Passion* suggest, a cursory reading of her narrative lends weight to the first, more optimistic, interpretation. Beginning with her reception by her Great Aunt Pia, Magnolia is subjected constantly to verbal abuse and defamation as a result of her cultural origins. A passer-by orders her dog to 'Faß die Negerin' on encountering Magnolia on the street (*WP*, p. 74), while a woman whom Magnolia meets in front of the *Peterskirche* suggests that she should return to her country of origin: 'sich mit dem [ihr] von Gott zugewiesenen Lebensort [...] bescheiden und nicht in übertriebenem Expansionsdrang die einem durch Volks- und Rassenzugehörigkeit gesetzten Grenzen [...] überschreiten' (*WP*, p. 390). Subsequently, the *Pastoralassistentin*, Frau Haslinger, comments on the racist attacks that have occurred in Vienna, suggesting that the victim, although possibly Catholic, was not entitled to God's help because her country of origin lay far beyond the reach of the Vatican: 'ihrer Meinung nach nehme die wahre Rechtsgläubigkeit allerdings mit zunehmender geographischer Entfernung vom Vatikan ab' (*WP*, p. 491). Magnolia's Aunt, Pia von Hötzendorf, greets her niece on her arrival in Vienna by suggesting that the latter is 'schwärzer, als sie sich mich vorgestellt habe' (*WP*, p. 36). As has been noted repeatedly in critical responses to *Wiener Passion*, the racially-targeted comments to which Magnolia is subject here double *fin-de-siècle* society's exclusionary treatment of Rosa on the basis of her Bohemian heritage. Indeed, in each of these instances, the character who displays the racist attitude evinces connections with one or other of the institutions that structured *fin-de-siècle* culture. The old lady with the dog is a proponent of the *fin-de-siècle* middle-classes, whose exploitation at the hands of the aristocracy she bemoans (*WP*, p. 9). She is also the daughter of a 'Wirklicher Hofrat in Ruhe', a title that reflects the *fin-de-siècle* obsession with status and resonates with Herr Lidner's ludicrous designation 'Oberpostrat'.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Certeau, *Practice*, p. 96.

⁹⁷ The title 'Wirklicher Hofrat in Ruhe' was introduced as a reaction to the reduction in the social status of those accorded the title 'Hofrat' after the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire. For more information on title inflation, see Robert A. Kann, 'The Case of Austria', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 15 (1980), 37-52.

The woman who Magnolia encounters in front of the *Peterskirche* belongs to the 'Wiener Verein zum Schutze christlicher Wertmaßstäben', the same organization as Rosa's third mistress Dora Vittoria Galli, who ultimately revealed herself to be obsessed with self-flagellation and witchcraft. Finally, Magnolia's Aunt Pia shares her surname with Franz Graf Conrad von Hötzendorf, named Chef des Generalstabs der gesamten bewaffneten Macht Österreich Ungarns in 1908.⁹⁸ These three characters, therefore, represent institutions to which Rosa falls victim in her narrative, namely *fin-de-siècle* bureaucracy, the middle-classes, religion and military power respectively. Despite the obvious similarities between the treatment that Rosa receives and that to which Magnolia is subjected, significant for our purposes is the difference in Magnolia's response. Whereas her *fin-de-siècle* counterpart is forced constantly to acquiesce to the discursive formations which the institutional agents she encounters attempt to perpetuate, Magnolia employs various methods in order to reduce the validity of the abuse she receives. Pia's objections to Magnolia's skin-colour and racist attitudes are passed off as the inconsequential ramblings of an old woman, whereas the incidents involving the two passers-by are reported ironically, represented, for example as 'Einsicht[en] in das goldene Wiener Herz (*WP*, p. 454). In this respect, Magnolia's narrative acts, as Eva Kuttenberg suggests, as a complement to Josef's. Whereas the latter's narrative unconsciously parodies the *fin-de-siècle's* cultural and social institutions and their inability in a contemporary age to organize urban space, their dwindling influence continues to be brought to bear on Josef, whose own pitiable personality is perhaps more an indicator of their declining relevance than the events he narrates. With Magnolia's narrative, a subject ostensibly emerges who is able to self-consciously reject her construction according to the discourses perpetuated by the social and cultural institutions which attempt to structure the social space in which she finds herself.

⁹⁸ Cf. Rudolf Kiszling, 'Franz Graf Conrad von Hötzendorf', in *Tausend Jahre Österreich*, Band 3: *Der Parlamentarismus und die beiden Republiken* (Vienna: Jugend u. Volk, 1974), pp. 39–46 (p. 41). For a more in-depth study of *Wiener Passion's* metafictional references to historical characters, see Eva Kuttenberg, 'A Post-Modern Viennese Narrative: Lilian Faschinger's *Wiener Passion*', *Montashefte* 101, (2009), 73–87.

Closer examination of Magnolia's treatment by the Viennese locals that she encounters, however, suggests that she has the potential to do far more than simply to reject the discourses that structure Viennese society. As Moser points out, Magnolia's critics are conscious not merely of her rejection of their cultural norms, but also of the potential she evinces for subverting them. The *Greisin* that Magnolia encounters at the *U-Bahn* station bemoans the possibility of the fourth district's population by the 'schwarze Brut' of the 'Neger aus Afrika' (*WP*, p. 72), whereas Tante Pia criticizes Magnolia's relationship with Horvath, allying her with the 'Ausländerfaktion, [...] die die Chancen der heiratsfähigen Wienerinnen auf Familiengründung schmälerten' (*WP*, p. 386). Magnolia also encounters a *Schuster* who demands to know more of her origins, and requests that she explain her 'akzentfreies Wienerisch' (*WP*, p. 472). In stark contrast to Rosa, Magnolia's conscious occupation of a subject position which incorporates elements of 'Viennese' and 'Black Other', threatens not only to destabilize, but to create anew, the discursive constructions by means of which each of these concepts is defined.

As has already been suggested, however, this optimistic reading of Magnolia's character provides only half the story. Magnolia's apparent capability to circumvent the discursive constructions of Austrian and Other which govern the field of power relations in twentieth-century Vienna does not render her body a neutral surface which is able to avoid signifying discourse in its entirety. As a closer reading of her relationship with the discursive regimes of Vienna suggest, her refusal to conform to the paradigms according to which the inhabitants of Vienna attempt to construct her merely constitutes Magnolia's unconscious privileging of the discursive system structuring American society over that which structures its Viennese counterpart. As well as the negative comments regarding Magnolia's skin colour, the protagonist is subject to constant comments from the natives regarding her body shape and sense of dress. The latter excludes Magnolia as a valid marriage prospect for Josef, who characterizes her style of dress as 'weder fraulich noch elegant', (*WP*, p. 129), whereas Tante Pia's concern is primarily focussed on Magnolia's slender frame, which she attempts to manipulate by insisting that Magnolia eat

the more substantial Viennese cuisine that she prepares. Characteristically, Magnolia rejects these offers of sustenance:

Zudem hätte ich noch eine Bitte, die Ernährungsfrage betreffend. Sie hätte doch nichts dagegen, daß ich meine Mahlzeiten in ihrer Küche zubereitete, wie sie sich denken könne, hätte jeder Mensch bestimmte Eßgewohnheiten, von denen er nicht abgehe. (WP, p. 64)

References to Magnolia's 'erschreckende Magerkeit' occur at numerous points during the novel (WP, p. 145, for example), along with allusions to her physical training programme, which primarily involves running in Viennese parks. Magnolia's preoccupation with the maintenance of a specific body shape suggests her allegiance to a discursive manifestation of femininity which, while it does not correspond with the ideal of *fin-de-siècle* femininity, evinces a power to subjectivate which is at least the equal to those discourses according to which Rosa's subjectivity is fabricated. A comprehensive insight into this updated paradigm is provided by Susan Bordo in her essay 'The Reproduction of Femininity'. Here, Bordo posits female slenderness, viewed in comparison with the corporeal bulk associated with the modern ideal of masculinity, as signifying the requirement to limit the degree to which femininity impinges on social space. Secondly, slenderness reinstates traditional gender relations, signifying the requirement that the female develop a completely 'other orientated economy', restricting the degree to which they can feed themselves in order to assure the adequate sustenance of their family. Taken together, Bordo suggests that these aspects of slenderness produce a restrictive dynamic by means of which the polarity of traditional gender relations, of male power over women, is inscribed on the female body. Sandra Bartky, self-consciously reproducing Foucauldian terminology, suggests that these restrictions on body size combine with external modification of the female body via make-up and clothing in order that the universal, panoptic male gaze might be satisfied:

In the regime of institutionalized heterosexuality, woman must make herself 'object and prey' for the man: it is for him that these eyes are limpid pools, this cheek baby-smooth. In contemporary patriarchal culture, a panoptical male connoisseur resides in the consciousness of most women: They stand perpetually before his gaze and under his judgment. Woman lives her body as seen by another, by an anonymous patriarchal Other.⁹⁹

⁹⁹ Bartky, 'Foucault', p. 96.

In the light of these assertions, the ostensibly more enlightened Magnolia, the product of a paradigm of liberated femininity proceeding from two complementary civil rights movements, is revealed to be no less subjected to constitutive discourses than her *fin-de-siècle* counterpart. More significantly, however, Magnolia's enmeshment in discursive construction also allows a more concrete parallels to be drawn between New York and the two conceptualizations of Viennese urban space present in the novel than has hitherto been the case. A brief examination of Magnolia's narration of her situation in New York reveals the extent to which she is constructed according to the interplay of discourses which inscribe themselves on her body. The initial clue as to the role of discourse in the fabrication of Magnolia's femininity proceeds from her role as an actor, an occupation which is based on a mimesis of the dynamics of subject production on the basis of discursive paradigms, which, in this instance, Magnolia is wholly unable to fulfil. She admits that she has had problems being cast because of her skin-colour, which John F. de Luca interprets as an indicator of short-sightedness on the part of the theatrical establishment. For his part, de Luca professes allegiance to the more open-minded, non-traditional philosophy of Peter Brook, who was able to thwart theatrical convention by staging productions of Shakespearean plays with multi-ethnic casts.

Gerade habe er auf [Peter Brook] hinweisen wollen [...] den er seit Jahren nacheifere. Was spreche dagegen, ein Musical über Sigmund Freud auf die Bühne zu bringen, in dem nur farbige Leute aufträten [...] ein solcher Gedanke sei vollkommen einleuchtend, seien nicht die Juden die Schwarzen Europas, die Afroamerikaner der Alten Welt, ließe sich ihre Marginalisierung, ihre Ausgrenzung nicht mittels dieses Kunstgriffs auf das Überzeugendste repräsentieren? (WP, p. 48).

Quite aside from the absurdity of the premise for the proposed production and the ironic triviality of de Luca's attempts to destabilize the paradigms of character through the staging of a musical, the latter's enthusiastic endorsement of his project reproduces a series of negative discourses surrounding the otherness to which he purports to be blind. The equation of Jewishness with Blackness, as Gilman suggests 'synthesizes two projections of

otherness in the same code',¹⁰⁰ a synthesis that is reproduced in the discourse on the Jew proceeding from Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, where the Jew's blackness is opposed to the Aryan's whiteness.¹⁰¹ De Luca's reproduction of a negative discourse surrounding the Black Other does not restrict itself to comparisons with the Jews, however. In every conversation that takes place between them, de Luca refers to Magnolia through nicknames which involve brown foodstuffs and objects, including 'Nußbraunes Negerpüppchen' (*WP*, p. 554). Thus, de Luca not only 'constructs [Magnolia] diminutively', as Kennedy suggests, but also conflates her gender and racial otherness as a means of subordinating her to him. In the character of John F. de Luca junior, and in Faschinger's presentation of New York into which Magnolia's encounter with him provides an insight, the reader is confronted with a city in which the relation between subject formation and discourse is analogous to those which structure *fin-de-siècle* Vienna, but with an added element of hypocrisy. While ostensibly presenting New York as more enlightened than either of the historical conceptualizations of Vienna that feature in the novel, Faschinger in fact exposes the underlying play of discourses at the basis of the conservative, traditionalist power relations which structure the city's culture.

Significantly, one arena exists in which Magnolia, initially at least, is not subject to the degrading treatment which the discourses of Faschinger's modern cities seem to demand. Magnolia's burgeoning relationship with Josef, whose development constitutes the chief concern of the novel's framing narrative, acts in many respects as a counterfoil for Magnolia's relationship with John. Particularly significant is Magnolia's focalization of her first sexual encounter with Josef, in which she alludes with satisfaction to the reversal of traditional gender binaries. This reversal is experienced by Magnolia as a highly liberating source of sexual pleasure:

[...] die Verkehrung der üblichen Geschlechterrollen in ihr Gegenteil verstärkte mein Begehren, und während ich verzückte Täterin und Josef willfähriges Opfer war, bedauerte ich, daß es fast dreiunddreißig Jahre gebraucht hatte, bis mir ein so unwiderstehlich nachgiebiger, ein mein tatkräftiges Handeln so sichtlich genießender Mann begegnet war. (*WP*, p. 390)

¹⁰⁰ Sander L. Gilman, *Jewish Self-Hatred: anti-Semitism and the hidden language of the Jews* (Baltimore; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), p. 8.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

The reversal of traditional gender roles in the context of the Magnolia and Josef's first sexual liaison can be read as evidence for the existence of contingent manifestations of the heterosexual binary which subvert the positions traditionally encoded as masculine and feminine, hence suggesting a contingent set of circumstances in which the experience of embodiment might triumph over the dynamics of subject production through discourse. As we have seen, Magnolia is constantly expected to acquiesce to discursive manifestations of femininity which are dependent on the spatiotemporal context in which she finds herself. Numerous aspects of Magnolia's character, most obviously her tenacity and directness, combine to create a certain dissonance which is smothered by her forced acquiescence to subversive paradigms. Further, Josef's characterization of Magnolia as 'unfraulich', and her acquisition of the stereotypically masculine totalizing perspective of New York during her flight to Vienna suggest that her embodied experience does not correspond with the discourses on femininity through which she is constructed. This is confirmed to a certain extent by Bordo, whose third interpretation of female slenderness emphasizes its signification of gender dissonance, primarily as a result of the determination and strength of mind required to maintain it. Even in this case, however, the degree to which women are permitted to evince stereotypically 'masculine' characteristics is determined, and severely limited, by a patriarchal discourse on femininity that aims to fabricate female subjects who conform to an ideal of slenderness, and are thus pleasing to the male eye:

[Young women today] [...] must also learn to embody [...] 'masculine' language and values [...] self-control, determination, cool, emotional discipline, mastery and so on. Female bodies now speak symbolically of this necessity in their slender shape. [...] Our bodies, too, as we trudge to the gym every day and fiercely resist both our hungers and our desire to sooth ourselves, are becoming more and more practiced at the 'male' virtues of self-mastery.¹⁰²

Her relationship with Josef can be read as constituting the only arena in which Magnolia is able to evade the influence of discursive subjectivation and express her dissonant embodied experience of gender by assuming the role usually accorded to the male participant. Magnolia's ability to carry out this

¹⁰² Susan Bordo, 'The Body and the Reproduction of Femininity', in *Writing on the Body*, 7th edn, ed. by Katie Conboy, Nadia Medina, Sarah Stanbury (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 90-113 (p. 96). Cf. also Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1993), p. 113.

highly liberating role, however, is utterly dependent on the specific modality of subjectivity which Josef evinces. The latter's acceptance of the passive, stereotypically female role can be seen to indicate his acceptance of the typically feminine subject position into which his oedipal economy inserts him. From the outset of the novel, Josef's continued admiration for his dead mother, and his sexual relationship with the older *Präfekt* constitute him as the occupant of the negative oedipal complex that lies at the heart of the normative interpretation of homosexuality. In accepting the passive role in his sexual relations with Magnolia, therefore, Josef's body comes to inhabit the stereotypically feminine subject position which his embodied experience demands. This process of 'acceptance' of femininity, combined with Josef's homosexuality and the emphasis on Josef's body in Magnolia's narration of their tryst allows parallels to be drawn with the theories of Felix Guattari. Kaja Silverman's investigation of the role of femininity in homosexuality draws on Guattari's work in order to form a paradigm of the relationship between the two positions, combining observations from 'Becoming a Woman' with revelations from an interview entitled 'Liberation of Desire'. In the former text, Silverman contends, Guattari reformulates the concept of femininity as constituting a 'de-territorialized corporeality'.¹⁰³ In the latter text, with reference to homosexuality, Guattari posits the achievement of this variant of 'femininity' as constituting an 'escape route from a repressive social structure'.¹⁰⁴ Silverman, on the basis of her earlier conceptualization of Guattarian femininity as constituting a de-territorialized corporeality, suggests that the process of 'becoming woman' offers an escape-route leading beyond signification. The effects of his sexual encounter with Magnolia on Josef articulate with Silverman's identification of femininity with a de-territorialized corporeality. During the couple's love-making, the many small bottles of medicine that signify the hypochondriac weakness of Josef's body are smashed. Subsequently, Josef relates a dream in which his mother and the *Präfekt*, representing the two players in his particular reverse Oedipal triangulation, appear singing a duet,

¹⁰³ Kaja Silverman, *Male Subjectivity at the Margins* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 392.

¹⁰⁴ Silverman, *Subjectivity*, p. 347.

and then fade, suggesting a parallel psychic de-territorialisation, and the resolution of Josef's oedipal dilemma.

While the dynamics of Magnolia's and Josef's sexual relationship and the subsequent effects on Josef's corporeality and subjectivity reproduce and extend the terms of Silverman's reading of Guattari, ensuing events eliminate any optimism regarding the couple's potential to subvert traditional gender binaries. Far from occasioning Josef's transcendence of the symbolic order, the process of de-territorialization in fact leads to the restoration and reaffirmation of conventional gender relations. As the novel reaches its conclusion, Josef begins to take on the dominant role in the relationship, demanding that Magnolia remain with him in Vienna and permitting her to use his broom-cupboard for rehearsal. However incongruent this turn of events may seem in the context of Guattari's theory of femininity, it can in fact be accounted for through a reading that diverges from Silverman's. Contextualization of Guattari's comments regarding woman's ability to maintain the surfaces of the body suggests that the mutual exclusivity of corporeal (feminine) and phallic (masculine) sexuality is not as clear-cut as Silverman asserts. Guattari maintains:

Woman has preserved the surfaces of the body [...]. [Man] has concentrated his libido on—one can't even say his penis—on domination, on rupture on ejaculation; 'I possessed you', 'I had you'. Look at the expressions used by men: 'I screwed you', 'I made her'. It is no longer the totality of the body's surfaces that counts, it's just this sign of power: I dominated you, I marked you'. The obsession with power is such that man ultimately denies himself of all sexuality. On the other hand, in order to **exist as body**, he is obliged to beg his sexual partner to transform him a bit into a woman [...].¹⁰⁵

What Silverman seemingly misses in Guattari's rhetoric is the suggestion that the act of sex constitutes one of mutual subjectivation. That human subjectivity only qualifies as such if marked by sex constitutes a central tenet of the Foucauldian interpretation of the relationship between sex and power. As Butler has shown, Foucault views sex as a totalizing construct that unifies diverse bodily sensations and functions, and which canalizes the desire of the subject. Butler's modification of this Foucauldian principle interpolates gender

¹⁰⁵ Félix Guattari, 'A Liberation of Desire' in *The Guattari Reader*, ed. by Gary Genosko (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp. 204- 215 (p. 213). Emphasis mine.

differentiation by proposing that the canalization of desire affected by the act of sex corresponds to discursively-constructed paradigms of heterosexual desire. The majority of critical material regarding the act of sex agrees that 'real sex' is constructed around the eroticization of gendered power differences and the resultant dialectic of dominance and submission, activity and passivity. Hence, the process of subjectivation which the act of sex entails is necessarily more pronounced in the case of the person assuming the latter role, in the context of which the dialectic of production and restriction on which subjectivation is based is clearly more distinct. The act of so-called 'real sex' thus fabricates the woman in her subjection. Contextualization of Guattari's observations in his *oeuvre*, particularly the material relating to the concept of 'becoming-woman' in *Thousand Plateaus*, confirms the suspicion inherent in the foregoing quotation that the male subject's investiture with sexuality, and hence his ability to take up the dominant relation in the heterosexual constellation, is predicated on his undergoing the process of 'becoming woman'. As Deleuze and Guattari state, '[s]exuality proceeds by way of the 'becoming-woman' of the man [...]'.¹⁰⁶ Under the terms of this reading, the de-territorialization of Josef's subjectivity and corporeality effected by Magnolia's domination of him constitutes the precondition for his investiture with a sexuality, and hence to the re-establishment of the traditional relations of domination and submission which govern heterosexual relations.¹⁰⁷ As Faschinger herself testifies:

[...] you have to take that happy ending with a pinch of salt because [Josef] is [...] beginning to act in a domineering way. The prospects are ultimately no better than those in Magdalena the Sinner, should Magdalena have chosen to stay with the Austrian Clemens, who offered her a stifling small-town existence.¹⁰⁸

CONCLUSIONS

This reading of *Wiener Passion* explores and assesses the role played by disciplinary techniques in the fabrication and manipulation of the urban subject. As we have seen, the configuration of Vienna proposed in Rosa

¹⁰⁶ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, new edn, trans. by Brian Massumi, (London: Continuum, 2007), p. 307.

¹⁰⁷ The domination/submission binary is analysed comprehensively in Jessica Benjamin, *The Bonds of Love* (New York: Pantheon, 1988).

¹⁰⁸ Ellie Kennedy, 'Identity Through Imagination: An Interview with Lilian Faschinger', *Women in German Studies Yearbook*, 18 (2002), 18-30 (p. 26).

Hawelka's narrative constitutes the influence of such techniques at the level of the institution, and in the broader arena of the urban environment, as all-pervasive. Disciplinary techniques are shown to mark and fabricate the urban subject, determining its motility, its urban trajectory, and the manner in which it perceives and reproduces its immediate environment and the situations with which it is confronted. Throughout the novel's framed narrative, moreover, Faschinger makes almost constant reference to potential loci of resistance to the discourses that structure the disciplinary regime. Each of these potential methods of resistance, however, is ultimately re-interpolated into the service of disciplinarity, strengthening the ability of discourses, and the techniques of disciplinarity that underpin them, to fabricate and manipulate the urban subject. As a result, the formal aspects of Rosa's narrative allow the ultimate goal of the disciplines, namely the domination of subjects through the production of the carceral system, to be achieved. Writing from the prison, Rosa effectively succeeds where disciplinarity has hitherto failed. Rosa's production of an autobiographical narrative from within the confines of the prison not only casts her as the paradigmatic delinquent, but also transforms the panopticon of *fin-de-siècle* Vienna into a carceral city.

Rather than merely relativizing Rosa's experience and 'offering a contemporary perspective on it', the framing narrative attests to the evolution of disciplinary techniques in the contemporary urban milieu. The astounding weakness of the *fin-de-siècle's* structuring institutions in the context of contemporary Vienna, which is parodied so effectively in Josef's narrative, is juxtaposed with a new type of disciplinarity that can function independently of institutional supports. The 'neuer Frauentyp' that Ingrid Pfandl-Buchegger sees manifest in Magnolia Brown is a self-policing subject that unconsciously upholds and conforms to the discursive constructs that structure the milieu in which she finds herself. For Magnolia, an attempt to circumvent the influence of these discourses only reinstates and reinforces their hold over her. Divested of their institutional supports, disciplinary techniques continue to structure urban space, and to constitute the urban subject, even in rebellion, as the principle of its own subjection.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CITY AS LABYRINTH: READING RABINOVICI WITH BENJAMIN

Doron Rabinovici's second novel, *Suche nach M.* (1997) focusses on the bizarre experiences of its main protagonists, Dani Morgenthau and Arie Arthur Bein.¹ Both the sons of Holocaust survivors, the protagonists are brought up by relatives who have been unable to work through the trauma precipitated by their Holocaust experiences, and the losses that they sustained as a result of it. Living under the shadow of their relatives' guilt, and in a society that refuses to acknowledge their status as victims, both protagonists acquire during the course of their upbringings an intuitive gift for the detection of guilt and the guilty. When he is confronted with a criminal who denies his crimes, a rash develops all over Dani's body that only abates when he takes on their guilt. Arie, meanwhile, takes on the appearance and habits of those who have wronged him. After murdering a Neo-Nazi who was responsible for a racially-motivated attack, Arie moves to Israel in order to learn about his Jewish heritage. On arrival, however, he is recruited by the Mossad, and put to work tracing enemies of the state so that they can be assassinated. Dani's developmental trajectory is rather more complex. When the authorities reject his father's application for compensation, due to him for the injuries he sustained in the course of the Holocaust, Dani leaves home, but resurfaces later in the novel in the guise of Mullemann. He wanders the streets of Vienna covered in bandages, claiming guilt for crimes that he did not commit. This tendency leads him to be mistaken for an assassin, and accused of a double murder; he then begins to send letters to the police confessing the guilt for a spate of rapes committed by another character, Helmut Keysser. As a result, Mullemann becomes the object of a nationwide manhunt, which Arie returns from Israel to participate in. After being apprehended by the police, who are aware of his innocence, Mullemann begins to work for them, using his talents to

¹ Doron Rabinovici, *Suche nach M. Roman in zwölf Episoden* (Frankfurt a.M.: SUhrkamp, 1997). Further references to this work will appear in the body text, identified as *M.*

crack hitherto unsolved criminal cases. The end of the novel sees Ariele returning to Israel to begin a new life with his wife and daughter, while Mullemann escapes from his police residence and disappears into the crowd.

Rabinovici, who was born in Tel Aviv in 1961 and has been resident in Vienna since 1964, is widely perceived as one of the leading lights of a 'small but vibrant' Jewish literary scene that developed in Austria during the late 1980s and 1990s.² Consensus prevails with regard to the catalyst for this revival, with critics citing 1986, the year of the Waldheim affair, as a constitutive 'Wende' for the status of Jewish writers in post-war Austria.³ A comprehensive account of the transformation is provided by Matti Bunzl, who insists that the reinvigoration of Jewish literature in Austria in the wake of the Waldheim Affair was the result of a radical restructuring of Austria's social sphere. As he convincingly demonstrates, the nature of Jewish existence in Austria in the aftermath of the Second World War had been determined by the need to perpetuate the Second Republic's founding myth, which cast Austria as the first victim of National Socialist aggression. Enshrined in both the Declaration of Independence and the State Treaty, the 'victim myth' became the keystone of the Second Republic's national identity. Its continued stability required the collectivized exclusion of the real victims of National Socialism, the Jews themselves, from Austria's public consciousness. Those Jews who took on public roles were thus forced to compartmentalize their identities. As Konzett shows, Chancellor Bruno Kreisky was a case in point. Subordinating his Jewish heritage to a unified ideal of Austrian national identity in the national sphere, Kreisky spearheaded an international policy that 'intervened in an unorthodox manner for the Palestinian right to self-determination'. Thus, '[w]hile avoiding the confrontation of his own ethnic heritage in Austria's public sphere, Kreisky [...] responded sensitively to the plight of an ethnic minority on an international

² Matti Bunzl, 'Political Inscription, Artistic Reflection: A Reconceptualization of Contemporary Viennese- Jewish Literature', *The German Quarterly*, 73 (2000), 163-170 (p. 163).

³ The titles of Matthias Beilein's monograph, *'86 und die Folgen* (Berlin: Schmidt, 2008), and Günther Scheidl's essay 'Renaissance des jüdischen Romans nach 1986', in *Judentum und Antisemitismus: Studien zur Literatur und Germanistik in Österreich*, ed. by Anne Betten and Konstanze Fleidl (Berlin: Schmidt, 2003), pp. 132-150) both mark the occasion as a turning-point in Austria's literary and cultural history.

level'.⁴ This disavowal of Jewish identity with the intention of maintaining a cohesive sense of Austrian nationhood was repeated by Jewish authors. Bunzl cites as examples Hans Weigel and Friedrich Torberg. While Weigel 'styled himself as a Kraussian Sprach-purist—the protector of an ethnically un-marked German', Torberg's involvement in the boycott of Brecht's plays in Austria during the 1950s '[safeguarded] the Austrian state from an imagined communist infiltration'.⁵

The international political upheaval caused by the Waldheim Affair, however, forced a thoroughgoing re-evaluation of the victim myth. The focus of public discourse shifted, and emphasis was placed on the question of 'the role of Austria in the creation and functioning of National Socialism'.⁶ Matthias Beilein summarizes the dynamics and effect of Waldheim's influence as follows:

Die Person Kurt Waldheims funktionierte hier als stellvertretendes Objekt für das sich breitmachende Unbehagen, daß die Zweite Republik ihre staatliche Legitimation auf Mythen begründete, Waldheim wurde damit ungewollt zum Aufklärer, denn der Mythos von Österreich als erstem Opfer des Nationalsozialismus wurde durch ihn völlig destruiert.⁷

The 'obliteration' of the victim myth coincided with the coming-of-age of a new generation of Austrian Jews who, Bunzl suggests, saw reproduced in the Waldheim affair 'the cultural abjection and constitutive silencing of Austria's Jewish population'.⁸ Refusing to conform to the accommodationist stance of the Israelitische Kultusgemeinde, they instead 'championed the public creation of

⁴ Matthias Konzett, 'The Politics of Recognition in Contemporary Austrian Jewish Literature', *Monatshefte*, 90 (1998), 71-88 (p. 76).

⁵ Bunzl, 'Inscription', p. 165. The 'Brecht boycott', Andrew Barker suggests, was indicative of 'the almost hysterical Anti-Communism in the early years of the Second Republic', which coincided with the early years of the Cold War. Barker notes that 'thanks to the relentless anti-Communism of Torberg and [Hans] Weigel, there were no Brecht performances at any of the established theatres in Vienna between February 1952 [...] and 1963. Andrew Barker, 'The Politics of Austrian Literature, 1927-56 in *A History of Austrian Literature: 1945-2000*, ed. by Katrin Maria Kohl and Ritchie Robertson (New York: Camden House, 2005), pp. 107-126 (p. 121).

⁶ Heidemarie Uhl, 'The Politics of Memory', in *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity*, ed. by Günter Bischof and Anton Pelinka (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1997), pp. 64-94.

⁷ Matthias Beilein, 'Wende im Entweder-und-Oder: Österreich und die engagierte Literatur seit 1986', in *Engagierte Literatur in Wendezeiten*, ed. by Willi Huntemann and others (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2003) 209-222. Beilein's suggestion that Waldheim was responsible for the total destruction of the victim myth is somewhat exaggerated. He notes elsewhere that Waldheim's election team painted him as the victim of a smear campaign organized by the Austrian and American Jewry, a manoeuvre that perpetuated Austria's founding myth rather than obliterating it. Cf. Matthias Beilein, *'86 und die Folgen*, p. 39.

⁸ Bunzl, 'Inscription', p. 165.

autonomous spaces as the most viable means of affirmative subjectification'.⁹ In combination, the renewed desire of Austria's Jewish community to carve out for itself an autonomous public identity, and a non-Jewish community more accepting of alternative interpretations of Austria's role in National Socialism and the Holocaust, effected the reinvigoration of Jewish involvement at all levels of Austrian culture. In the literary sphere, the thematization and renegotiation of Austrian history that had accompanied the Waldheim affair 'allowed writers to articulate their concerns before a national and international arena more than ever before'. Konzett continues:

[...] on the level of the cultural public sphere and its critical examination of Austria's fascist and post-fascist history (Bernhard, Jelinek, Schindel, Kerschbaumer, Reichart, Roth), Jewish themes and concerns now received more resonance in Austria.¹⁰

A conspicuous characteristic of critical responses to the resurgent tradition of Jewish writing is a slippage in the milieu with which it is associated. Günther Scheidl's essay 'Der Renaissance des "jüdischen" Romans nach 1986', for example, neglects to associate the genre whose parameters it lays out with a particular national literature, thereby attributing it an international reach belied immediately by the allusion to the Waldheim affair implicit in the title's reference to 1986. Matthias Konzett, by contrast, initially places the reinvigorated literary tradition in its wider Germanophone context, suggesting the resurgence of Jewish writing in Austria to be symptomatic of 'the tireless self-analysis of German guilt by German authors'.¹¹ Of most importance for the present project, however, are Bunzl's narrower terms of reference. The title of the latter's analysis, 'A Reconceptualization of Contemporary Viennese- Jewish Literature', locates the 'small but vibrant' literary scene it identifies squarely in the Austrian capital. Bunzl's emphasis on capital rather than country as the constitutive environment for Austria's contemporary Jewish literature is corroborated by a number of critics. Both Matthias Beilein and Günther Scheidl credit contemporary Austrian-Jewish writing, and particularly its leading lights Menasse, Rabinovici and Schindel, with the resuscitation of *Großstadtliteratur* in an Austrian context. Scheidl even goes as far as to maintain that Robert

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Konzett, 'Recognition', p. 78.

¹¹ Bunzl, 'Inscription', p. 138.

Menasse's earliest novels, *Sinnliche Gewißheit* and *Selige Zeiten, Brüchige Welt*, are '[...] die ersten, seit Doderer, die den Lebensraum "Stadt" als Handlungsort unbefragt voraussetzen'.¹²

Hilary Hope Herzog provides a more nuanced assessment of the city's significance in contemporary Jewish writing. She cites a tendency to 'adhere to the tradition of city writing' as a defining feature of contemporary Austrian Jewish literature, and one that distinguishes it from its German counterpart.¹³ During the brief assessment of Vienna's role in Austrian-Jewish literature that precedes her examination of Ruth Beckermann's work, Herzog identifies a triadic relationship between the city, history and individual and collective identity that is at once conflicting and mutually constitutive:

[Contemporary Austrian-Jewish authors'] approaches to the difficult task of negotiating identity as an Austrian Jew are crucially bound up with a primary identification with Vienna. However important, it is nonetheless a highly complex relationship between Jewish writers and the city [...]. As they seek to create new narratives of the Jewish experience of the past and present, they are continually confronted with a city that exists at once as a lived experience in the present and is at the same time located in the past as a space of both personal and collective Jewish history.¹⁴

Hope Herzog's comments are corroborated by Doron Rabinovici in his short essay 'Der nationale Doppler'. Written in the aftermath of the 1999 *Nationalratswahlen*, which led to the formation of the 'Schwarz-Blaue Koalition' between the ÖVP and Jörg Haider's FPÖ, the article features two 'protagonists', 'der in Wien lebende D. Rabinovici' and 'der in Tel Aviv geborene Doron R'.¹⁵ The essay presents the Viennese and Tel-Avivian facets of Rabinovici's identity as incommensurable, and defines their relationship as 'schizoid'.¹⁶ Rabinovici identifies as the catalyst for this schizophrenia the representation and treatment of immigrants during the FPÖ's election campaign, and draws parallels between the party's attempt to incite xenophobia and the treatment of Vienna's Jews under National Socialism:

¹² Günther Scheidel, 'Der Renaissance des jüdischen Romans nach 1986', in *Judentum und Antisemitismus: Studien zur Literatur und Germanistik in Österreich*, ed. by Anne Betten and Konstanze Fliedl, pp. 132-48.

¹³ Hilary Hope Herzog, 'The Global and The Local in Ruth Beckermann's Films and Writings', in *Rebirth of a Culture: Jewish Identity and Jewish Writing in Germany and Austria*, ed. by Hilary Hope Herzog, Todd Herzog and Benjamin Lapp (Oxford: Berghahn, 2008), pp. 100-120 (p. 100).

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Doron Rabinovici, 'Der Nationale Doppler', *Der Standard*, 18 October, 1999.

<<http://www.hagalil.com/archiv/99/10/austria.htm>> [Accessed 9 August, 2010] (para. 3)

¹⁶ Ibid, para. 4.

So gehe ich als nationaler Doppler, als hochprozentiges Gemisch, durch die Straßen, in denen eben noch flammengelb der Hass gegen die Fremden geschürt wurde, und fühle mich so eigen und ganz fremd [...]. Mag sein, [...] dass die Österreicher die Vergangenheit nur allzu gerne vergessen, doch jedem halbwegs gebildeten Menschen außerhalb des Alpenlandes holt angesichts der FPÖ-Kampagnen die Erinnerung ein, überkommt der Gedanke an die Geschichte.¹⁷

Rabinovici's comments substantiate Hope Herzog's contention that Vienna exists in duplicate for its Jewish population. His inability to reconcile the two facets of his identity in contemporary Vienna proceeds from the city's constant intrusion as a 'space of collective history'. For Rabinovici, the past's encroachment on lived experience is a consequence of the ubiquitous manifestations of right-wing political ideology visible in the contemporary cityscape, which evoke a previous configuration of the Austrian capital.

Vienna's intrusion as a space of history is not an exclusively limiting phenomenon, however. Other elements of Rabinovici's *oeuvre* place the past's encroachment on the present at the heart of his literary projects, positing the complex interaction between history and lived experience as the driving force behind the 'new narratives of the past and present' that he attempts to formulate. The essay 'Wie es war und wie es gewesen sein wird' responds to the ongoing debate on the representability of the Holocaust and the extent to which literature, more particularly that of the post-Shoah generation, can contribute usefully to the process of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. Rabinovici criticizes the increasing prevalence of representations of the Holocaust that banalize or trivialize the events concerned. He observes that contemporary society's increasing temporal distance from the Holocaust has given rise to a widespread concern that these events may appear 'zu blaß oder zu graulich' for a contemporary audience,¹⁸ resulting in a tendency both to sensationalize and to fetishize the historical event. In an effort to provide a counterpoint, Rabinovici locates literature's potential contribution to *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* in the fictional text's inherent subjectivity, which places it in a unique position to

¹⁷ Ibid., para. 4.

¹⁸ Doron Rabinovici, 'Wie es war und wie es gewesen sein wird: eine Fortschreibung von Geschichte und Literatur nach der Shoah' <http://www.rabinovici.at/texte_wieeswar.html> [Accessed 9 August 2010] (para. 36).

document the historical event 'wie es gewesen sein wird'.¹⁹ Rabinovici clarifies his position as follows:

Literatur kann verdeutlichen, wie es gewesen sein wird, und das bedeutet nicht bloß, wie es wohl geschehen sein könnte, sondern heißt weiters, eine Kalkulation, ein Zählen im Erzählen, eine Abrechnung mit dem, was uns noch zustoßen kann. Es heißt, fortzuschreiben, wie es überwunden und einst eingesehen werden wird.²⁰

The process of 'Fortschreiben' in which Rabinovici purports to engage involves the interpretation of lived experience through a filter provided by historical events, writing the present 'im Lichte, nein vielmehr im Schatten des Vergangenen'. This strategy allows Rabinovici to 'rätseln, wie es gewesen sein wird', facilitating the 'writing forward' of Austria's post-Holocaust history by conceptualizing in his literature possible methods of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* and conceiving of a future in which the traumatic memories of past events will have been effectively worked through. For Rabinovici, this mode of 'literary historiography' transforms the literary author into a 'Geschichtsschreiber, der in die Zukunft schaut'.²¹

The mechanics of Rabinovici's approach to Austrian history resonate with the conceptualizations of Vienna set forth in both 'der nationale Doppler' and in Herzog's analysis of Vienna's position in Austrian Jewish writing. Vienna's existence at once as 'lived experience' and as a 'space of personal and collective Jewish history' suggests that the city itself might provide the ideal object of study for a project seeking to write the present 'im Schatten des Vergangenen'.²² Through a reading of Rabinovici's debut novel *Suche nach M.*, this chapter therefore investigates the role that the city occupies in the 'literary historiography' championed in 'Wie es war und wie es gewesen sein wird', positing the narration of urban topography as one of the central strategies that Rabinovici employs in order to 'write history forward' in the way that he suggests.

My reading of the novel, however, sets Rabinovici's comments in a broader theoretical context. The mode of historical representation that Rabinovici proposes resembles the avatar of historical materialism championed

¹⁹ Ibid., para. 22.

²⁰ Ibid., para. 55.

²¹ Ibid., para. 58.

²² Ibid., para. 54.

by Walter Benjamin. Rabinovici's wish to narrate the present 'im Schatten des Vergangenen' articulates exactly with the goal of Benjamin's unfinished *magnum opus*, the *Passagenwerk*, which aimed to decipher the lived reality of late modernity by 'telescoping the past' through the present.²³ At the centre of this project was the city of Paris itself, which, like Rabinovici's Vienna, existed as a multi-layered construction comprised of innumerable historical configurations. By recovering the traces of modernity's lost origins that were buried beneath the city's 'mythic' surface and realigning their relationship with the lived present, Benjamin aimed to facilitate an authentic, political conception of modernity that would shatter its mythic foundations.

In what follows, I argue that Rabinovici employs similar techniques to achieve a comparable goal. At the heart of Rabinovici's novel is an engagement with the myth of Austrian victimhood, which allows Vienna to be presented in accordance with Benjaminian paradigms as a mythic space, cut off from its origins by its inhabitants' enforced silence on the topic of the Holocaust. The representation of Vienna set forth in the novel employs distinctly postmodern strategies that modify Benjamin's paradigms, producing a mode of representation that parallels the contemporary responses to the Holocaust that Rabinovici so vehemently criticizes. As a counterpoint to these strategies, Rabinovici formulates his own conception of Benjamin's redemptive method as a means by which Austria's history might be productively 'fortgeschrieben'.

Such a reading must necessarily proceed with caution. Graeme Gilloch's characterization of the *Passagenwerk* as 'a vast, sprawling amorphous study' signals the complications associated with the text's deployment as the basis for a theoretical framework.²⁴ In an effort to circumvent the problems posed by the complexity of the *Passagenwerk*, this reading of Rabinovici's novel will follow the trajectory suggested by the development of the single key metaphor in Benjamin's urban thought, specifically that of the labyrinth.

²³ Cf. Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 7 vols ed. by Ralf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1972-89), V: *Das Passagenwerk*, ed. by Tiedemann (1982), p. 588. 'Telescopage der Vergangenheit durch die Gegenwart'.

²⁴ Graham Gilloch, *Myth and Metropolis: Walter Benjamin and the City* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996) p. 93.

MAZES AND MAPS

The labyrinth's key characteristics are visible in the earliest of Benjamin's *Denkbilder*, the short study of Naples that he composed with Asja Lacis.²⁵ The account centres on the lack of boundaries between phenomena that characterized the Neapolitan urban landscape, a feature that rendered it 'porös'.²⁶ The absence of rational spatial organization attenuated the subject's ability to orient itself in the urban landscape, forcing it to rely on its senses and instincts instead of such prototypically modern, rational way-finding devices as maps, signs or house-numbers. This sense of disorientation is explored further in 'Berliner Kindheit um 1900', which opens with a brief excursion on the skill involved in getting lost, or more accurately, losing oneself, in the city:

Sich in einer Stadt nicht zurechtfinden heißt nicht viel. In einer Stadt sich aber zu verirren, wie man in einem Walde sich verirrt, braucht Schulung. Da müssen Straßennamen zu dem Irrenden so sprechen wie das Knacken trockener Reiser und kleine Straßen im Stadttinnern ihm die Tageszeiten so deutlich wie eine Bergmulde widerspiegeln.²⁷

Benjamin's experiences of disorientation in the cities presented in the course of the *Denkbilder* have been schematized by more contemporary theorists under the heading of cognitive mapping.²⁸ Originating in the field of cognitive psychology,²⁹ behavioural geographers coined this term to refer to the process 'composed of a series of physiological transformations by which an individual acquires, codes, stores and recalls and decodes information about the relative locations and attributes of phenomena in his everyday spatial experience'.³⁰ Kevin Lynch explores the relevance of cognitive mapping for the interpretation of the subject's interaction with the urban environment in his *The Image of the*

²⁵ Walter Benjamin and Asja Lacis, 'Neapel', in Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, IV: *Kleine Schriften, Baudelaire Übertragungen*, ed. by Timann Rexroth (1972), pp. 307-316.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 309.

²⁷ Walter Benjamin, 'Berliner Kindheit um 1900' in *Gesammelte Schriften*, IV: *Kleine Prosa. Baudelaire-Übertragungen*, ed. by Tillman Rexroth (1972), pp. 237-303 (p. 238).

²⁸ Mike Savage notes that 'Benjamin's approach seems [...] [close] to the idea of cognitive mapping briefly discussed by Jameson', but seeks to distance Benjamin's conception of the city from the work of Kevin Lynch, on which Jameson's account of cognitive mapping consciously draws. Cf. 'Walter Benjamin's Urban Thought: a critical analysis', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 13 (1995), pp. 201-216 (p. 213).

²⁹ Cf. Edward C. Tolman, 'Cognitive Maps in Rats and Men', *The Psychological Review* 55 (1948), 189-208.

³⁰ Roger M. Downs and David Stea, 'Cognitive Maps and Spatial Behaviour: Process and Products' in *Image and Environment: Cognitive Mapping and Spatial Behaviour*, ed. by Roger M. Downs and David Stea (Chicago: Aldine, 1973), pp. 8-26 (p. 9).

City.³¹ Described as ‘a piece of rhetoric about the “good city”’,³² Lynch’s study provides an analysis of the mental maps of Boston, Los Angeles and New York supplied by a group of interviewees. Lynch’s ‘good city’ is a legible one whose layout allows its inhabitants to construct a coherent ‘city image’ that informs their movement through the urban environment. According to Lynch, a city image ‘which [has] value for orientation [...]’ must evince four characteristics.³³ Of these, two are particularly significant for our purposes. First, Lynch suggests that the cognitive map must be clear enough to ‘allow the individual to operate within his environment to the extent desired’ with a minimum of mental effort.³⁴ Second, it should contain ‘blank spaces’, the traversal of which will allow the individual to extend and alter his or her city-image through the addition and organization of supplementary spatial information.³⁵ Should a city image be devoid of these properties, Lynch suggests, the consequences for the subject will be catastrophic:

To become completely lost is perhaps a rather rare experience for most people in the modern city. We are supported by the presence of others and by special way-finding devices: maps, street numbers, route-signs, bus placards. But let the mishap of disorientation once occur, and the sense of anxiety and even terror that accompanies it reveals to us how closely it is linked to our sense of balance and well-being. The very word ‘lost’ in our language means much more than simple geographical uncertainty; it carries overtones of utter disaster.³⁶

A conspicuous characteristic of the novels discussed thus far in this thesis is the different extents to which the configurations of Vienna that they set forth could be considered ‘legible’. The three narrators of Faschinger’s *Wiener Passion*, on the one hand, describe their itineraries in minute detail so that readers are constantly able to orient themselves in the city that the characters traverse. Even those readers unfamiliar with Vienna are provided with a clear and reliable cognitive map of the city that enables them to identify the topographical relationships between the various locales in which the action takes place. As we will see in the next chapter, the reader of *Es geht uns gut* is presented with a narrated topography in which the area around the Sterks’s

³¹ Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, MA; London: MIT Press, 1992), p. 9.

³² Steve Pile, *The Body and the City: Psychoanalysis, Space and Subjectivity* (London; New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 218.

³³ Lynch, *Image*, p. 9.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

villa is emphasised at the expense of the city itself.³⁷ In *Suche nach M.*, the 'masking' of Vienna is achieved primarily through techniques of focalization. The effect of these techniques is two-fold: they reduce drastically the amount of spatial information that the reader is given, and attenuate systematically his ability to organize that information. The result is that Rabinovici's novel infringes both of the criteria for an 'efficient city image' delineated above. The reader of *Suche nach M.* is consequently afflicted throughout by a strong sense of disorientation. The techniques that Rabinovici deploys to produce this effect are manifest in Rudi Kreuz's focalization of his journey from a café to his office. The first portion of his journey is narrated as follows:

Seit Kreuz aus dem Café in das Schneefegen getreten war, folgte ihm jener sonderbare Fremde mit Stock und vermummtem Gesicht, doch dem Greis konnte kaum einer unbemerkt nachstellen; zu viele hatten es bereits versucht. Kreuz stapfte in ein Durchhaus knapp nach einer Straßenecke, hetzte trotz des wehen Knies hinter den Vorbau eines Torhauses, um den Unbekannten abzuschütteln oder zu stellen. (*M*, p. 159)

Perhaps the most obvious characteristic of the foregoing quotation is the prevalence of the indefinite article to refer to the features of the urban landscape that Kreuz traverses. The Café that Kreuz leaves is not named, and no information is given regarding its location. The sense of disorientation that this technique produces is heightened subsequently when, after a brief conversation with Mullemann, the narration of Kreuz's journey is broken off, and picks up once more when the pair has reached Kreuz's office (*M*, p. 160). Once more, the location of the office remains indeterminate, and the reader is not given any information regarding Kreuz and Mullemann's route to it. In combination, the drastic reduction of topographical diegesis and the omission of characters' trajectories through the city allow Rabinovici to invert the function of the 'blank spaces' that are an essential feature of Lynch's 'effective' city-image. Blank spaces abound in Rabinovici's novel, but characters' traversal of these yields

³⁷ It is worth noting that a high level of legibility is characteristic of the classic *Wien-Romane*. The introduction to Ingeborg Bachmann's *Malina* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp. 1971) for example, sees *Ich* relating the route she takes from town to her apartment in Vienna's third district. railing against the Ausbergers from his *Ohrensessel*, the protagonist of Thomas Bernhard's *Holzfällen* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1984), bemoans with considerable vitriol his decision to go walking in the centre of Vienna, giving the reader detailed insight into the trajectory he adopts through the city's first district. Looking back still further, Schnitzler's plays and short stories all set forth portrayals of Vienna that allow the reader to orient themselves easily and quickly in the narrated urban topography.

none of the spatial information that would allow the reader to refine his cognitive map of the novel's topography. At the same time, the omission of narrated topographies reduces drastically the reader's access to the 'supports' that typically prevent subjects from losing themselves in the city. The references to street-names, underground stops and historic landmarks that generate such a strong sense of place in *Wiener Passion* are absent from Rabinovici's novel.

The omission and reduction of topographical diegesis is complemented by a further technique of disorientation that infringes the first of Lynch's criteria for an efficient city-image: that it should allow the subject to operate in the urban environment with a minimum of cognitive effort. Rabinovici demands this effort explicitly from the reader of *Suche nach M.* by refusing to name Vienna as the novel's setting. The reader is instead forced to rely on epithets and other veiled clues to identify the city in which the characters are operating. While the techniques of reduction and omission undermine the reader's ability to orientate himself in Rabinovici's urban landscape, therefore, this narrative strategy foregrounds explicitly the mental effort that the process of orientation requires.

The characteristics of *Suche nach M.*'s urban topography delineated above suggest parallels with Benjamin's definition of the city as a labyrinthine environment in which the subject's ability to orientate itself is compromised significantly. Close examination, however, suggests that *Suche nach M.* modifies Benjamin's conception of the labyrinthine city in a way that points up its relevance in a postmodern context. One of the key characteristics of *Suche nach M.*'s topography is its transcendence of local and national boundaries. The novel's protagonists traverse the globe with ease, journeying to Israel, Italy and the Near East. Consequently, the novel attests to the 'collapse of spatial barriers' that critics, among them David Harvey, define as a key characteristic of the postmodern condition.³⁸ Dagmar Lorenz posits this global topography as typical of writing by second and third-generation Jewish authors. She maintains that that the presence of an 'übernationale Geographie' in Rabinovici's novels, as

³⁸ David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), p. 293.

well as works by Barbara Honigmann, Esther Dischereit and Robert Schindel, indicates their achievement of 'die für Durchschnittsdeutsche und -österreicher noch ausstehende emotionale Integration in [...] einer übernationalen Weltkultur'.³⁹ In the context of *Suche nach M.*, however, Lorenz's reading fails to take into account the repetition in Rabinovici's narration of the global arena of the techniques that produce a sense of disorientation at local level. Dani Morgenthau, for example, travels to 'ein arabisches Land', in which he and his friends immediately attract the suspicion of a customs official at the local airport where they land (*M.*, p. 41). Arie Scheinowitz's trip to Italy is also characterized by a familiar lack of topographical information so that, once more, the reader is unable to map his exact location; Arie simply arrives 'in einem Hotelzimmer Italiens' (*M.*, p. 142).

Rabinovici's construction of a transnational narrated topography that the reader is unable to map permits an interpretation of his 'Kulturverständnis' that conflicts with Lorenz's. Concluding the introduction to his *Postmodernism, or; the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*,⁴⁰ Fredric Jameson provides a reading of Lynch's work that equates the subject's disorientation in the un-mappable city with a sense of alienation. Jameson extends the relevance of the cognitive map beyond the confines of the city, redefining its function in accordance with the Althusserian definition of ideology. Jameson states:

[the cognitive map] [...] is called upon [...] to enable a situational representation on the part of the individual subject to that vaster and properly unrepresentable totality which is the ensemble of society's structures as a whole.⁴¹

Thus extended into the realm of the social, Jameson's redefined cognitive map is subsequently applied to the problematic of postmodernism. Jameson argues for an 'aesthetic of *cognitive mapping*',⁴² which has the capacity to map efficiently 'the world space of multinational capital'.⁴³ Such a development, Jameson

³⁹ Dagmar C.G. Lorenz, 'Erinnerung um die Jahrtausendwende: Vergangenheit und Identität bei jüdischen Autoren der Nachkriegsgeneration', in *Deutsch-Jüdische Literatur der 90er Jahre: die Generation nach der Shoah* ed. by Sander L. Gilman and Hartmut Steinecke (Berlin: Schmidt, 2002), pp.149-161 (p. 154).

⁴⁰ Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism; or: The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *ibid.*, p. 54.

maintains, will allow the postmodern subject 'to grasp [its] positioning [...] and regain a capacity to act and struggle which is at present neutralized by [its] spatial as well as [its] social confusion'.⁴⁴ 'The political form of postmodernism', he suggests, 'will have as its vocation the invention and projection of a global cognitive mapping, on a social as well as a spatial scale'.⁴⁵ Thus extended into the realm of the social, Jameson's conception of the cognitive map resonates with the situation in which Rabinovici's protagonists find themselves. The reader's inability to map effectively the topography of Rabinovici's novel reflects the protagonists' incapacity to 'map their individual social relationship to local, national and international [...] realities' that for them have remained 'unlived' and abstract.⁴⁶ The various catalysts for the 'social confusion' that the novel's protagonists experience become clear when Rabinovici's urban topography is examined with reference to a further characteristic of Benjamin's labyrinth, namely its inextricable connection to the city's presentation as a 'mythic space'. This, the labyrinth's most crucial function, is connected intimately to its dual manifestation in the *Passagenwerk*, where it is established both as a paradigmatic *Wunschbild* and as privileged object of an archaeological investigation.

MAZE AND (POST-) MODERNITY

The labyrinth's dual function in the *Passagenwerk* means that it amalgamates two constructions that are central to Benjamin's attempt to expose modernity's mythic nature. Both are dependent on a distinct constellation of past, present and future that articulates with an element of Rabinovici's literary strategy, and therefore occupies a prominent position in the latter's examination of contemporary Vienna. In an entry in the *Passagenwerk's Konvolut J*, Benjamin describes the city as 'die Realisierung des alten Menschentraumes vom Labyrinth'.⁴⁷ This formulation points to the city's function as a *Wunschbild* that reifies an unconscious desire for a utopian future by adopting an outward

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 52.

⁴⁷ Benjamin, *Das Passagenwerk*, p. 540.

appearance that is commensurate with an *ur-form* which in turn coincides with an element of a mythic past. Buck-Morss describes the function and characteristics of the *Wunschbild* as follows:

[The contents of past myths] provide the motivation for future emancipation, which will not be literally a restoration of the past, but will be based on new forms that 'we are only beginning to surmise'. 'Every epoch dreams the one that follows it'—as the dream-form of the future, not its reality. The representations of the collective unconscious are not revolutionary on their own, but only when dialectically mediated by the material 'new' nature, the as-yet unimagined forms of which alone have the potential to actualize the collective dream.⁴⁸

The time-scheme that facilitates the realization of the wish-image's revolutionary potential articulates with Rabinovici's desire to write history 'wie es gewesen sein wird'. Rabinovici's literary projects reach into a past that has been rendered mythic by the discourses that determine its treatment in contemporary Austria. As I have already noted, his goal is to provide a hypothetical conceptualization of a future in which that past has been processed and overcome effectively. As Rabinovici suggests, the 'revolutionary potential' of this literary representation may only be realized *after* the process of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* has been completed:

Die universitäre Studie wird, so gut sie ist, in absehbarer Zeit überholt sein. Ein künstlerischer Text mag hingegen nach vielen Jahren erst an Kraft gewinnen. Literatur ist ein Prozeß, und sie ist ein Zeugnis des Scheiterns im Umgang mit der Vernichtung. Sie lotet aus, wo das Wort versagt, und auf diese Weise ist sie in jeder Bedeutung dieses Begriffes ein stetes Versprechen, eine unentwegte Fortschreibung, wie es gewesen sein wird.⁴⁹

Another significant element of Rabinovici's literary strategy, which seeks to write the present in the shadows of the past, finds resonance in the second of the labyrinth's manifestations in the *Passagenwerk*, where it also functions as the primary metaphor for Benjamin's attempt to uncover the 'mythical topography' of Paris. This iteration of the labyrinth is analysed extensively by David Frisby in the final chapter of his *Fragments of Modernity*. Frisby shows that the *Passagenwerk* sets forth not one 'labyrinthine layer of reality', but three: The labyrinthine structure of the city is now also mirrored in the Parisian catacombs, and in the Arcades themselves. These spatial labyrinths, furthermore, are juxtaposed constantly with the crowd, the city's 'eternally

⁴⁸ Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), p. 119.

⁴⁹ Rabinovici, 'Wie es war', para. 64

moving newest and animate labyrinth that was located on the streets'.⁵⁰ Significant in Frisby's reading is the central role that these interdependent labyrinthine figures are accorded in Benjamin's archaeological project. Frisby writes:

These three spatial layers of reality [...] were to be excavated by the archaeologist of modernity, excavated in order that the traces and signs of another reality could be both recalled and redeemed. The excavation was to reveal primal layers of experience, to cut a path through yet another labyrinth, as it were, that of the human consciousness.⁵¹

Benjamin's conception of the labyrinth as an object of archaeological investigation that can reveal the 'origins' of the historical present attributes the figure with a level of historical depth whose presence is essential to the success of his endeavour. Benjamin aims, in effect, to turn the historical object 'inside out', revealing the traces of the lost past that were hidden from view underneath 'that which is given to us'. The recovery of these traces was the first step in a process that would 'awake' the dreaming collective from its slumber. Corresponding with the aim of Rabinovici's literary projects, Benjamin's aim was to force a 'reassessment' of modernity's lived present through the filter provided by the objects that attested to its origins.

By modifying Benjamin's categories in his representation of contemporary Vienna, Rabinovici seeks to provide a counterpoint to a third conception of history that finds expression in the contemporary representations of the Holocaust that he criticizes. The conceptualization of history and its relationship to the present encoded in these representations runs contrary to the emphasis that Benjamin places on the object's historical depth. Benjamin's conception of the object pre-supposes an equivalence of essence and appearance, whereby the object's outward form betrays the nature of its 'ur-form' whose fragments are hidden beneath its surface. The equivalence of essence and appearance constitutes one of the 'depth models' that Fredric Jameson has identified as central to modernist thought, and thus as phenomena that differentiate modernist paradigms most clearly from their postmodernist counterparts. Postmodernism is characterized by 'a new

⁵⁰ David Frisby, *Fragments of Modernity: Theories of Modernity in the Work of Simmel, Kracauer and Benjamin* (Cambridge: Polity, 1985), p. 210.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

depthlessness, which finds its prolongation both in contemporary “theory” and in a [...] culture of the image or the simulacrum’.⁵² Subsequently, Jameson notes:

The new spatial logic of the simulacrum can now be expected to have a momentous effect on what used to be historical time. The past is thereby itself modified: what was once [...] the organic genealogy of the bourgeois collective project—what is still [...] the retrospective dimension indispensable to any vital reorientation of our collective future—has meanwhile itself become a vast collection of images, a multitudinous photographic simulacrum.⁵³

This observation finds resonance in Rabinovici’s assessment of the prototypically postmodern devices employed in contemporary representations of the Holocaust. Increasingly, Rabinovici suggests,

Die Untat wird zum Clip. Das Attentat zum Event. Die Folter zum Foto. Die Enthauptung zum Video, und wer zusieht, wie die Täter ans Werk gehen, sieht damit zu, daß sie ans Werk gehen. Die Medien sind ihr Tatort. Die Barbarei der Schauerlichkeiten weiß die Kultur der Beschaulichkeit zu nutzen.⁵⁴

The interaction between the three conceptualizations of the historical object explored above, namely as *Wunschbild*, object of investigation, and postmodern surface appearance, is a key element of *Suche nach M.*’s presentation of urban space and the city as an historical object. Rabinovici’s narrative repeatedly foregrounds, problematizes and ultimately rejects each of Benjamin’s conceptualizations of the historical object, pointing up the detrimental effects of the effacement of historical depth occasioned by contemporary Vienna’s response to its National Socialist past. The novel’s first episode is a case in point. Focalized by Holocaust survivor Jakob Scheinowiz, this episode provides an insight into the processes that complicate and ultimately foreclose the second generation’s access to the historical origins of its own lived present.

MAZE, MONUMENT AND MYTH

The first section of the novel’s initial episode is set in an unnamed *Kaffeehaus*, which Matthias Beilein identifies correctly as Café Prückel. Drawing on observations made by Henryk M. Broder, Beilein reads Rabinovici’s choice of location exclusively as a critique of Austria’s ‘relaxed’ attitude to its past:

⁵² Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism; or: The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London; New York: Verso, 1991), p. 6.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁵⁴ Rabinovici, ‘Wie es war’, para. 37.

Das Prückel ist [...] ein schönes Beispiel dafür, wie gelassen die Österreicher mit ihrer Geschichte umgehen. Es liegt am Lueger-Platz. Im hinteren Teil des Cafés sitzen alte Juden, spielen Karten, und es stört sie nicht, daß der Antisemit und Wiener Bürgermeister Lueger ihnen von seinem Denkmal zuschaut. Denn er ist tot, und sie leben. Worüber sollten sie sich denn aufregen?⁵⁵

Somewhat surprisingly, Beilein's brief assessment of Rabinovici's chosen location fails to account for the compensatory role that the *Kaffeehaus* occupied in the cultural imaginary of Vienna's post-war Jewish community. Matti Bunzl's ethnographic survey of Austria's post-war social sphere emphasizes the extent to which the city's Jews were 'structurally excluded' from the Second Republic's imagined community so that the fictional discourse of Austrian victimhood could be upheld effectively. This forcible exclusion was enacted during public addresses given by Austria's leading politicians, and perpetuated by such state institutions as schools and the mass media. Post-war public discourse thus constituted Jews as the irrevocable and constitutive Other of Austria's national collectivity. This discursive exclusion was complemented by increasingly violent acts of anti-Semitism committed against the capital's thousand-strong Jewish community:

By the 1950s, individual acts of anti-Semitism took center stage, foremost among them a 1954 instance of police brutality against a Rabbi who was detained amid shouts of 'Hitler has not exterminated enough Jews'. [...] In January of 1960s, *Die Gemeinde* [...] reported on the defacement of Vienna's main synagogue; a few months later [...] an event commemorating the last Jewish victims were disrupted by bellows of 'Heil Hitler'.⁵⁶

Confronted with a social sphere whose structuring discourses constituted them irrevocably as 'unerwünschte Fremde',⁵⁷ Vienna's post-war Jewish community established the *Kaffeehaus* as a privileged locus of identification, which provided a space of cultural continuity associated with the successful Jewish emancipation under Franz Josef at the *fin de siècle*. During the period in question, the Jewish community had experienced unparalleled advancement in Austria's cultural sphere, achieving prominence in fields such as music, literature, psychoanalysis and physiology. The continued presence of the traditional Viennese *Kaffeehaus* in the landscape of post-war Vienna thus

⁵⁵ Matthias Beilein, 'Unter falschem Namen: Schweigen und Schuld in Doron Rabinovici's *Suche nach M*, *Monatshefte*, 97 (2005), 250-269 (p. 251).

⁵⁶ Matti Bunzl, *Symptoms of Modernity: Jews and Queers in Late Twentieth Century Vienna* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), p. 45.

⁵⁷ Ruth Beckermann, *Unzugehörig* (Vienna: Löcher Verlag, 2001), p. 71.

provided a space where 'post-war Jews could localize and inscribe themselves in the enduring legacy of a Jewish *fin de siècle*'.⁵⁸

The Jewish recourse to Austria's imperial past is rehearsed in Rabinovici's description of Café Prückel's location and clientele. The narration of the outlook onto the *Ringstraße* employs the term 'Residenzstadt' to refer to Vienna. The city's imperial epithet invokes immediately the 'supernational vision of Habsburg identity' that Bunzl identifies as a corner-stone of Jewish identification with the city.⁵⁹ Such designations as 'Beamten' and 'Damenkränzchen' (*M.*, p. 7) recall the bourgeois social world that the *fin-de-siècle Kaffeehaus* accommodated. Scheinowiz himself takes part in the restitution of this utopia, styling himself as the paragon of the emancipated Jew by adopting a typically bourgeois style of dress:

Er übergab Schirm, Seidenschal, Mantel und Hut der Garderobière, zog die Zigarettenschachtel aus seinem Gilet, dazu das Ronsonfeuerzeug [...] Auf dem Weg zur Zeitungsanlage [...] nestelte er sein Kavalierstuch zurecht. (*M.*, p. 7)

Closer examination of Scheinowiz's narrated surroundings, however, suggests that Rabinovici's presentation of the *Kaffeehaus* is not limited to an uncritical recapitulation of Jewish identification with the *fin-de-siècle*. The café's interior is described as follows.

Das Café, sein Stammlokal, war ein Jahrzehnt nach dem Krieg umgebaut worden. Nichts erinnerte an die einstige Nußholzverschalung, nichts an die Nische, in der die Prinzipalin hinter ihrer gußeisernen Cassa gethront hatte. Die Wände waren geweißelt, eine Seite glänzte verspiegelt. Der Saal hatte an Weite gewonnen. Die neue Sitzbespannung war aus grünem Kunstleder. Über dem Eingang wies eine rechteckige Uhr die Zeit. Die Schirme der Wandleuchten und Stehlampen waren aus gelochtem Metall: Das Licht fiel wie durch ein Sieb. Eine Fensterfront des Cafés ließ auf die Prachtstraße der ehemaligen Residenzhauptstadt blicken, die andere auf einen Platz und das Monument eines Antisemiten von Weltrang. (*M.*, p. 7)

Scheinowiz's focalization constitutes Café Prückel as a palimpsestic space whose structure is akin to Benjamin's labyrinth. Scheinowiz focalizes the café's interior through reference to a subordinate 'layer of historical reality', specifically the interior as it had existed prior to its renovation 'zehn Jahre nach dem Krieg'. At first glance, therefore, the *Kaffeehaus* as setting constitutes a

⁵⁸ Bunzl, *Symptoms*, p. 52. See also his 'Counter Memory and Modes of Resistance: The Use of *Fin-De-Siècle* Vienna for Present-Day Austrian Jews', in *Transforming the Center, Eroding the Margins: Essays on Ethnic and Cultural Boundaries in German-Speaking Countries*, ed. by Dagmar C.G. Lorenz and Renate Posthofen (New York: Camden House, 1998), pp. 169-184.

⁵⁹ Bunzl, *Symptoms*, p. 52.

prototypical historical object whose 'excavation' would reveal traces of an earlier historical reality. This assessment is legitimated to an extent by the narration of the café's new interior, which emphasizes the new surfaces that cover up the previous décor. Other aspects of Scheinowiz's focalization, however, work against this interpretation. The 'subordinate layer' of historical reality is negated even before it is evoked; Scheinowiz maintains repeatedly that it has left no traces in the interior's new configuration. This simultaneous evocation and erasure of the café's previous configuration generates a form of 'flicker' that destabilizes the historical foundations of the narrated present. When read in combination with the descriptions of the café's new layout, furthermore, the absence of any trace of its previous interior suggests a conscious privileging of the 'Oberfläche' at the expense of historical depth. Closer examination of the café's narrated interior reveals that the surfaces visible in it connote a lack of authenticity. The new seat coverings are made from 'grünem Kunstleder', while one wall of the 'Saal' is covered by a mirror, perhaps the most powerful and ubiquitous of modernity's phantasmagorical devices.

Taken together, these characteristics lend the narrated historical reality of the *Kaffeehaus* an air of inauthenticity, which is rendered more concrete in the final sentences of the description. In a more complex reprise of the technique visible in the narration of the café's twin interiors, however, the narration of the view from its second window undercuts further the utopia that Rabinovici evokes. As Beilein notes, the 'Antisemit von Weltrang' whose monument the narrator alludes to is Dr Karl Lueger, Vienna's *Bürgermeister* during the final decades of the nineteenth century. Critical consensus, supported by a statement that Lueger himself made just before his death, suggests that he perceived anti-Semitism primarily as a device to be instrumentalized for political gain.⁶⁰ The allusion to Lueger's monument therefore points up the widespread anti-Semitic undercurrent that characterized the political climate in Vienna at the *fin de siècle*. Lueger rose to

⁶⁰ Lueger is said to have maintained 'Der Antisemitismus is a sehr gutes Agitationsmittel, um in der Politik hinaufzukommen; wenn man aber amal oben ist, kann man ihn nimmer brauchen; denn dös is a Pöbelsport'. Quoted in Manfred Scheuch, *Der Weg zum Heldenplatz: eine Geschichte der österreichischen Diktatur 1933-1938* (Vienna: Kremayr & Scheriau, 2005), p. 182.

political power on the basis of an overtly anti-Semitic political programme that had as its goal 'die Befreiung des christlichen Volkes aus der Vorherrschaft des Judentums'.⁶¹ He employed anti-Semitism as a 'politische Waffe'⁶² that united diverse sections of the population as well as political factions whose policies and ideologies were otherwise incommensurable. Wistrich notes:

Lueger und seine Mannen versuchten, die Juden in Wien als einen einzigen monolithischen Feind mit internationalen Verbindungen darzustellen, gegen den sich alle Christen verbünden mußten, wenn sie im Überlebenskampf bestehen wollten.⁶³

Read against this background, Rabinovici's narration of the *Kaffeehaus* endows the institution with the characteristics of Benjamin's *Wunschbilder*. By maintaining their involvement with contemporary manifestations of *fin-de-siècle Kaffeehauskultur*, Vienna's post-war Jewish community resurrect a dynastic cultural sphere in which racial and religious otherness were rendered irrelevant. Bunzl notes that the Jews of the Habsburg Empire 'were perfectly content in a structure that decoupled citizenship from ethnic and religious identity'.⁶⁴ The *Kaffeehaus* thus recalls a utopian past reminiscent of the 'classless society' that Benjamin's wish-images were intended to evoke. Rabinovici's allusion to Lueger's statue, however, exposes the 'mythic' character of the utopian past that the *Kaffeehaus* as wish-image is intended to reinstate. References to Lueger constitute Vienna's *fin de siècle* as a socio-political sphere structured by a '[regularized] public discourse that constructed Jews as a group existing in self-evident opposition to the national collectivity',⁶⁵ exposing the unstable foundations of the era's position in the cultural imaginary of Austria's Jewish community.

A brief review of Benjamin's assessment of the monument as a cultural product, however, makes clear that Rabinovici's mention of Lueger's statue has more far-reaching implications. Benjamin's most extensive examination of the monument occurs in the 'Siegestsäule' section of *Berliner Kindheit um 1900*, which links his autobiographical recollections with his 'Über den Begriff der

⁶¹ Karl Lueger, quoted in Robert S. Wistrich, *Die Juden Wiens im Zeitalter Kaiser Franz Josefs*, trans. by Marie-Therese Pitner (Vienna; Cologne; Weimar: Böhlau, 1994), p. 171.

⁶² Peter G.J. Pulzer, *Die Entstehung des politischen Antisemitismus in Deutschland und Österreich 1867-1914* (Göttingen: Vandenhöck & Ruprecht, 2004), p. 198.

⁶³ Wistrich, *Die Juden Wiens*, p. 190.

⁶⁴ Bunzl, *Symptoms*, p. 52.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

Geschichte', which was intended to form the prolegomena for the 'Passagenarbeit'. Both works establish the monument as the paradigmatic 'Dokument der Kultur', which as such is also 'ein solches der Barberei'.⁶⁶ The monument purports to commemorate cultural achievement, but in doing so also glorifies the barbarity and violence on which the victory it seeks to document is founded. It therefore functions as a symbol of memory and amnesia simultaneously. Benjamin maintains:

Wer immer bis zu diesem Tage den Sieg davontrug, der marschiert mit in dem Triumphzug, der die heute Herrschenden über die dahinführt, die heute am Boden liegen.⁶⁷

By refiguring it as a monument to an 'Antisemit von Weltrang', Rabinovici complicates the interpretation of history that Lueger's monument signifies. Begun in 1913 in the wake of massive public demand, and unveiled in 1926, the monument's dedication reveals that it conforms exactly to Benjamin's assessment of the *Siegessäule*. The dedication runs:

Um die Jahrhundertwende
(1897-1910)
Lenkte die Geschicke der Stadt Wien ein Mann von:
Lauterstem und edelstem Charakter
Glühendem Patriotismus
Reinster Liebe zu Volk und Stadt
Tiefstem, sozialem Empfinden
Nie erlahmender Arbeitslust
Schöpferischer Tatkraft—
DR. KARL LUEGER
Die Dankbarkeit der Bewohner und der Freunde der Stadt Wien
hat ihm dieses Denkmal gesetzt, damit es künde:
seinen Namen und seine Größe kommenden Geschlechtern,
Ihnen Wegweiser sei zu edler Bürgertugend und opferfreudiger
Pflichterfüllung.⁶⁸

The dedication enacts a version of history that casts Lueger as the paragon of statesmanship and civic duty, so that the monument stands as a testament to his cultural achievements, while ignoring those sections of the population that were disenfranchised by the policies that ensured his political ascendancy. Rabinovici's refiguring of Lueger's contribution to the Austrian political sphere

⁶⁶ Walter Benjamin, 'Über den Begriff der Geschichte', in *Gesammelte Schriften*, 7 vols ed. by Ralf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser, I: *Abhandlungen* (1974), pp. 690-708 (p. 696).

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Markus Kristan, 'Denkmäler der Gründerzeit in Wien', in *Steinernes Bewußtsein I: die öffentliche Repräsentation staatlicher und nationaler Identität Österreichs in seinen Denkmälern*, ed. by Stefan Resienfellner (Vienna; Cologne; Weimar: Böhlau, 1998), p. 121.

through the epithet 'Antisemit von Weltrang', however, re-inscribes the historical discourse that the monument signifies by drawing attention to that aspect of Lueger's politics that is omitted from the dedication. Mapped onto Benjamin's observations with regard to the monument as a cultural product, Lueger's statue, thus re-narrated, becomes a testament to the 'victory' of anti-Semitism. The *fin de siècle* is thus posited as the source of an alternative 'Jewish continuity' that links it firstly to the atrocities of the Holocaust, and thence to post-war Austrian memory politics. Contemporary historiographic responses to Lueger highlight not only the extent to which his particular brand of Anti-Semitism influenced Adolf Hitler, but also his personal responsibility for 'das, was nachgeschah'.⁶⁹ Johannes Hawlik notes that Lueger's instrumentalization of anti-Semitism to mobilize mass support for a political agenda provided the necessary groundwork for the National Socialists' success, thus positing the former's policies as a necessary 'preliminary stage' for Nazi atrocities:

Man kann Lueger von einer direkten Verantwortlichkeit für die Nazigreuel gegen die Juden insofern nicht freisprechen, als er diese Untaten zwar nicht aktiv in die Wege leitete, sie aber ohne die von ihm geleistete Vorarbeit in dieser Weise nicht denkbar wären. Die Flut der antisemitischen Hetzliteratur in seiner Bibliothek zwingt einen dazu ebenso wie die Tatsache, daß er sozusagen in cold blood, also wohl aus politischer Überlegung mehr als aus Überzeugung eine Sprache führte, die unvertretbar war und ist.⁷⁰

Commentators have also noted the similarities between National socialist politics and the exclusionary discourses that enforced Austria's post-war memory politics. Ruth Beckermann alludes to the noticeable discursive continuity in her book *Unzugehörig*:

Für uns Nachgeborene ist die Kontinuität der Schamlosigkeit, mit der österreichische Juden, die aus dem Konzentrationslager oder aus der

⁶⁹ The *Lueger Denkmal* has recently been the subject of considerable controversy. In 2009, an initiative named 'Luegerplatz' <www.luegerplatz.at> [Accessed 9 August 2010] was set up to lobby for the transformation of the *Denkmal* into a 'Mahnmal gegen Antisemitismus und Rassismus'. Rabinovici himself was heavily involved with the project, participating in the press-conference that accompanied the initiative's establishment, and serving as a member of the jury that selected the preferred design for the *Mahnmal*. The winning design, by Klemens Wiedhal, 'sieht vor, dass die Statue und ein Teil des Sockels um 3,5 Grad nach rechts geneigt werden'. Asked about the motivation for his design, Wiedhal commented '[Die Umgestaltung] [...] führt eine Irritation bei den BetrachterInnen herbei, das Monument gerät in Unruhe, es soll die Frage evoziert werden: Wie geht es jetzt mit dem Denkmal weiter? Entgegen eines Denkmalsturzes, wird in dem Moment, wo die Statue nur gekippt wird, das Denkmal zum Mahnmal'. Cf. 'Lueger-Denkmal soll gekippt werden', <http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20100512_OTS0126/mlueger-denkmal-soll-gekippt-werden> [Accessed 9 August 2010], para. 4.

⁷⁰ Johannes Hawlik, *Der Bürgerkaiser: Karl Lueger und seine Zeit* (Vienna: Herold, 1985), p. 200.

Emigration zurückkehrten, behandelt wurden, kaum fassbar. [...] der Überlebende [...] kehrte [...] in eine Umwelt zurück, die ihm nicht nur feindlich gegenüber stand, sondern die mittlerweile bewiesen hatte, dass ihre Feindschaft bis zur Vernichtung reicht. Und auf die er existenziell angewiesen war wie nie zuvor. Juden wurden nach der Zerschlagung des Dritten Reiches in Österreich nicht mehr gekennzeichnet und umgebracht, man ließ sie jedoch keinen Augenblick im Zweifel, dass sie unerwünschte Fremde waren.⁷¹

The first section of *Suche nach M.*, therefore, narrates a layer of historical reality whose integrity is rendered questionable from the outset. The choice of a *Kaffeehaus* as setting, together with the descriptions of clientele and location, endow the narrated present with a level of historical depth by reinvigorating a narrative of the *fin-de-siècle* as the age of Jewish emancipation advancement. References to the *Lueger-Denkmal*, however, introduce an interpretation of *fin-de-siècle* history that negates this narrative of Jewish emancipation, rendering the narrated reality's historical foundations unstable by exposing the interpretation of history it is based on as false. The narrated present is thus exposed as mythic. At the same time, references to Lueger introduce an alternative historical narrative of exclusion and persecution that runs from the *fin de siècle* to the narrated present. Thus, the labyrinthine nature of Rabinovici's narrated Vienna is replicated in the complex and contradictory interplay of historical discourses that structure the narrated present. Rabinovici's representation of the *Kaffeehaus* thus evinces a number of parallels with Benjamin's interpretation of Paris as a mythic space.

Firstly, as we have seen, the *Kaffeehaus* as narrated by Rabinovici is endowed with the characteristics of Benjamin's wish-images, recalling a mythically utopian past in response to a repressive and exclusionary present. The validity of the mythic continuity from which this wish-image proceeds, furthermore, is negated irrevocably by an alternative historical narrative that reveals the treatment of the Jewish community in post-war Vienna to be merely the newest iteration of a dynamic of persecution and exclusion. In other words, the narrated present is constituted in Rabinovici's representation as 'das Neue im Zusammenhang des immer schon Dagewesenen',⁷² corresponding to Benjamin's earliest definition of Parisian modernity. A further parallel is to be found in the formal equivalence between urban topography and history evident

⁷¹ Ruth Beckermann, *Unzugehörig* (Vienna: Löcher Verlag, 1989), p. 110.

⁷² Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, V: *Das Passagenwerk*, p. 570.

in the first section of Rabinovici's novel. Rabinovici's interpretation of history renders it a labyrinthine figure that offers myriad possibilities for its own interpretation. As we have seen, however, the most obvious of these possibilities leads to a dead end: an attempt to interpret Rabinovici's representation of the *Kaffeehaus* through the lens of Austria's dynastic history as a space that is indicative of Jewish emancipation is complicated by references to Lueger's statue. These permit an alternative, and altogether more pessimistic, reading of the continuities that Rabinovici's allusions to the *fin-de-siècle* set up.

As the narrative progresses, however, the privileging of the surface whose origins are visible in the novel's initial sections becomes the defining characteristic of Rabinovici's narrated topography. As we have seen, a conspicuous characteristic of this topography is the omission of supports by means of which the reader might orient himself in the city. Among these 'supports' Lynch names the landmark and the route-sign. To this list we can usefully add the most ubiquitous of way-finding devices, the street sign. As well as assisting the urban subject on his stroll through the city, however, each of these way-finding devices performs both an historic and a mnemonic function. Writing of the placement of monuments in French cities and towns, for example, Marc Augé maintains:

[...] a minimal historical dimension has always been imparted to French urban and village space by the choice of street names. Streets and squares have always been used for commemoration. Of course it is traditional for certain monuments [...] to lend their names to the streets leading up to them, or the squares on which they are built. [...] But the main streets in towns and villages are more usually named after notables of local or national life, or great events of national history; so that to write an exegesis of all the street names in a metropolis like Paris one would have to review the entire history of France, from Vercingetorix to de Gaulle.⁷³

Read against Augé's comments, the scarcity of topographical detail in *Suche nach M.* becomes a significant element of Rabinovici's presentation of the city as a mythic space. The omission of characters' narrated itineraries and the lack of information given pertaining to the location of the novel's settings mean that the reader is refused access to elements of the urban landscape that function typically as documents of the city's history. Also significant is the nature of the

⁷³ Marc Augé, *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, trans. by John Howe (London: Verso, 1995), pp. 65-66.

locales in which the novel occurs. The only public places named in the novel other than the *Kaffeehaus* are a bank, a supermarket and an office. Matthias Beilein makes very brief reference to the fact that these constitute what Augé defines as non-places, but he neglects to expand on their connotations for an interpretation of Rabinovici's urban topography. Augé coins the term to refer to those sites that 'cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity'.⁷⁴ In combination with the absence of historical documents, the ubiquity of the non-place in Rabinovici's narrated Vienna suggests a rejection of Benjamin's hermeneutic of historical depth. The non-places that make up the lived present of Rabinovici's Vienna are perforce immune to the kind of archaeological project that Benjamin proposes. Their inability, or better their refusal, to incorporate earlier places means that the lived present that they comprise is left entirely bereft of historical foundations.

The initial sections of *Suche nach M.* document the beginnings of a tendency toward the privileging of the surface whose origins coincide with the founding of the Second Republic. The date of the café's restoration, 'zehn Jahre nach dem Krieg' corresponds chronologically to the signing of the *Staatsvertrag*. Read against this background, the privileging of the surface evident in Rabinovici's representation both of the *Kaffeehaus* and Vienna at large is lent more far-reaching connotations, constituting a satirical jab at the 'double-speak' that characterized Austria's post-war rhetoric of national identity. More importantly, however, the multitude of historical discourses that structure the narrated space of Rabinovici's *Café Prückel* fade in subsequent sections, so that the effacement of historical depth becomes the overriding principle of Rabinovici's narrated topography in those chapters of the novel that relate to the contemporary city. The privileging of the surface in Rabinovici's representation of Vienna's urban topography corresponds with a transformation that is instituted by the post-Shoah generation and brought to bear on their children. The older relatives of the novel's main protagonists, Dani Morgenthau and Arie Scheinowiz, continue to suffer the traumatic effects of their experiences during the Holocaust, which necessarily attenuate their ability to provide a coherent account of their ordeal. In combination with the strategies

⁷⁴ Ibid., pp. 78-79.

through which the survivors seek to compensate for the losses that they have sustained as a result of the Shoah, their inability to communicate their experiences necessarily denies both protagonists any comprehensive knowledge of their own ancestral histories. Just as the city is rendered unable to bear the burden of history, therefore, so the family is denied its conventional function as a bearer and transmitter of collective memory,⁷⁵ a circumstance that prevents both protagonists from constructing for themselves a coherent sense of personal identity.

EINE SCHIZOIDE SITUATION: DANI MORGENTHAU.

My comments on the function of communicative memory and its interrelationship with personal identity in *Suche nach M.* will restrict themselves to the experience of the novel's central character, Dani Morgenthau. My reasons for this are two-fold. First, the sections of the novel that provide an insight into the circumstances of Dani's upbringing are those that explore most comprehensively the ways in which Holocaust trauma affects both the survivors themselves and the generation of *Nachgeborene*. Second, the particular role that Dani occupies in his relatives' attempts to compensate for the losses that they sustained during the Holocaust is key to the redemptive method that Rabinovici develops in the course of the novel.

Dani's immediate family consists of his parents and his grandmother, who moved to the family home after suffering a heart-attack. Dani's mother and grandmother each survived their internment in 'Ghetto und Lager' (*M.*, p. 28). His father's family, meanwhile, spent the majority of the Holocaust in hiding 'am Stadtrand Warschaus' (*M.*, p. 29). Shortly before the city's liberation however, they were reported by neighbours who had become aware of their existence, an event that had fatal consequences for Moscha's relatives:

Er hatte überlebt—seine Eltern, die kurz nach der Anzeige ermordet worden waren, damals jünger als er heute; seine Geschwister, Samuel und Ruth; alle Kinder der gemeinsamen Religionsstunde; auch der Lehrer. (*M.*, p. 26)

⁷⁵ Cf. Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. by Lewis A. Corser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

The character of discourse on the Holocaust in the Morgenthau family corresponds precisely to psychoanalytic accounts of traumatic memory. Moscha Morgenthau's reaction to events that trigger memories of his experience is one of dissociation: he leaves the room or 'schaltet [...] auf einen anderen Sender' when confronted with news reports that thematize the Holocaust (*M.*, p. 28). The strategy of dissociation is also manifest in the account that the novel provides of Moscha's time in hiding, during which he is referred to as 'der Junge, der später Danis Vater werden sollte' (*M.*, p. 26). While Dani's father remains silent about his Holocaust experiences, however, his mother and grandmother choose instead to communicate to Dani fragments of information about their ordeals. Tonja, a representative of the generation that, according to Jan Assmann, has reached the stage at which 'der Wunsch nach Weitergabe und Fixierung [eines Ereignisses] [...] wächst',⁷⁶ relates disconnected 'Episoden der Verfolgung' (*M.*, p. 30), while his mother's answers to his questions take the form of curt, decontextualized declaratives that are presented in the text without reference to the question asked: "'Stehend', erklärte sie. In Viehwaggons". [...] "Wer hat dir über Onkel Danek erzählt?" und dann "Erschossen. Im Wald"' (*M.*, p. 31). This fragmentation is repeated in exchanges on the subject of the Holocaust that take place between Dani's older relatives. Dani's father, for example, prevents his mother-in-law from voicing her concern that Dani, emaciated and pale, resembles the inmates of the concentration camps, with a perfunctory 'nu, dann sprech's ja nicht aus' (*M.*, p. 32). Public discourse on the Holocaust, which penetrates the domestic sphere through the media, elicits an equally abstract response from both Gitta and Tonja. Dani's focalization of their reaction to news reports on the topic of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* reifies the fragmented nature of his access to his older relatives' ordeal:

Zwischen [Gitta und Tonja] herrschte ein einmütiges Schweigen. Eine Meldung in den Abendnachrichten genügte, [...] und schon schlossen die Frauen ihre Blicke kurz; schien die Luft geladen mit Erinnerung. Wenn die Frauen einander so anschauten, zirpte es in Danis Kopf, glaubte er zwischen ihnen Teilchen schwirren zu sehen, als zittre Gemüch im Lichte nächtlicher Scheinwerfer. (*M.*, p. 28)

⁷⁶ Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*, 14th edn. (Munich: Beck, 1999), p. 52.

Conventional interpretations of traumatic memory posit the fragmented communication of experience as a by-product of repression, a phenomenon that Jameson shows to be grounded in a specific interrelationship between surface and depth. Among the 'four fundamental depth models', Jameson lists 'the Freudian one of latent and manifest'.⁷⁷ Jameson's observations therefore signal that the mechanics of communicative memory in the Morgenthau family in fact run counter to the argument pursued here that Dani's problematic sense of personal identity is to be attributed to the effacement of depth. Yet in combination with the character of Dani's role in his relatives' attempts to compensate for the losses that they sustained during the Holocaust, the effect of his fragmented access to their experience legitimates an interpretation that corresponds more closely to Jameson's theorization of postmodern subjectivity. Before examining this alternative approach, however, it is necessary to engage in more detail with the compensatory strategies that Dani's relatives deploy, and the nature of the role that he plays in them. Significantly, these involve recourse to one of the key conceptualizations of the historical object that governs Rabinovici's representation of the city.

Dani's father deals with his experience of the Holocaust through recourse to a narration of history that is designed to evade any references to his personal experiences. He responds to his son's demands for information by narrating an alternative history, specifically that of Dani himself:

Wollte der Junge etwas hören aus jenen Tagen, lächelte der Erwachsene müde und sagte 'Es war einmal ein kleiner Junge und der hieß Dani. Danis Geschichte schien die einzige zu sein, die seinem Vater geblieben war; ihm galten seine Tageträume, denen sein Kind nichts abgewinnen konnte. (*M.*, p. 31)

Moscha Morgenthau's response to his son's demands for 'eine Geschichte' establishes Dani's biography as the origin of a new historical narrative that is intended to transcend the familial sphere. The narrative strand relating to Dani's childhood makes patent that the latter is intended to become involved in a new history of Jewish advancement and emancipation:

Der Jugendliche [wollte] seine Angehörigen nicht enttäuschen [...] nicht seinen Vater, der den Anfang einer neuen, einer anderen, einer richtigen Geschichte herbeisehnte, einen Sohn, unbeschwert von der Last der Vergangenheit, doch erfüllt vom Vermächtnis der Überlieferung, der war einmal ein kleiner Junge

⁷⁷ Jameson, *Postmodernism*, p. 12.

und er hieß Dani. [...] [Er sollte] den anderen seine Gleichwertigkeit beweisen, und die der Juden schlechthin. (*M.*, p. 36)

A counterpoint to Moscha's perception of his son is provided by the latter's grandmother, Tonja. Tonja recognizes in her grandson 'die Wiederkehr der ermordeten Verwandten [...]' (*M.*, p. 36), a phenomenon well-documented in Holocaust psychoanalysis. Dina Wardi, for example, emphasizes

[t]he intensity of the survivor parents' expectations from their children — that they would [...] serve as a compensation and a substitute for their relatives who had perished, their communities that had been wiped out and even for their own previous lives. For if they could not consider their new children a continuation of the loved ones they had lost, all their suffering and their efforts to survive would have seemed to them a worthless sacrifice.⁷⁸

Taken together, Moscha and Tanja's parallel expectations of Dani mean that he comes to function as a form of *Wunschbild*. He is called upon both to re-enact the utopian, pre-Holocaust past during which the relatives whose 'Wiederkehr' he represents were still alive, while at the same time being made responsible for the security of a mythically utopian future, serving in his father's eyes as the departure point for a new narrative of universal emancipation and cultural ascendancy. Once more, these Janus-faced expectations of the Second generation find their basis in contemporary accounts of intergenerational relationships in the families of survivors. Dina Wardi notes that

[t]he content of the messages transmitted by the survivors to their children[...] contain an ethical appeal [...] that can be summarized in a few sentences: you are the continuing generation. Behind us are ruin and death and infinite emotional emptiness. It is your obligation and your privilege to maintain the nation, to re-establish the vanished family and to fill the enormous physical and emotional void left by the Holocaust in our surroundings and in our hearts.⁷⁹

The compensatory function that Dani is expected to fulfil automatically denies him control over his own biography, which, as Günther Scheidl notes, is appropriated as a form of 'Projektionsfläche für die Wünsche der Eltern'.⁸⁰ What Scheidl fails to note, however, is the extent to which these strategies complicate Dani's perceptions of his own ancestry. Dani is rendered unable to conceive of the Shoah as part of his ancestral history, and expresses doubt as to the veracity of the partial accounts of their experiences that his relatives provide.

⁷⁸ Dina Wardi, *Memorial Candles: Children of the Holocaust*, trans. by Naomi Goldblum (London; New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 27.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁸⁰ Günther Scheidl, 'Renaissance', p. 141.

Bereits mit acht Jahren — viel früher als seine Klassenkollegen — wußte er von den Verbrechen der Massenvernichtung, bezweifelte er keineswegs, daß sie stattgefunden hatten, insgeheim aber, daß Papa, Mutti und Oma dabeigewesen sein konnten. (*M*, p. 32)

Significantly, this refusal is mirrored in Dani's explicit unwillingness and inability to perceive the act of sexual intercourse between his parents as the site of his own origin:

Im Grunde hatte die Mutter ihn über die menschliche Fortpflanzung aufgeklärt, doch daß er einer solchen Verquickung seiner Eltern entstammte, daß sie tatsächlich miteinander schliefen, konnte er und wollte er nicht vorstellen. (*M*, p. 26).

Dani's problematic perception of his own origins, and of the position that the Holocaust occupies in his own ancestral narrative, is indicative of a form of fragmentation other than that which emerges as a symptom of traumatic memory. Taken together, Dani's fragmented access to his parents ordeals, and his relatives' tendency to appropriate his biography precipitate what Jameson refers to as a 'breakdown in the signifying chain'.⁸¹ Drawing on Lacan, Jameson notes that 'meaning-effect', the illusion of the signified, is a product of the 'interrelationship between signifiers'.⁸² This interrelationship means that language 'has a past and a future'. It is the sentence's ability to 'move through time' that Lacan sees as the basis for the subject's experience of temporality, and hence a 'feeling of identity', which depends on 'our sense of the persistence of the "I" and the "me" over time'.⁸³ The schizophrenic experience, by contrast is predicated on the breakdown of the interrelationship between signifiers that produces a sense of temporal and historical continuity. As a result, he or she

[...] is condemned to live a perpetual present with which the various moments of his or her past have little connection and for which there is no conceivable future on the horizon. In other words, the schizophrenic experience is an experience of isolated, disconnected, discontinuous material signifiers which fail to link up into a coherent sequence. The schizophrenic thus does not know personal identity in our sense.⁸⁴

Jameson suggests that the schizophrenic subject's lack of ability to organize the chronology of its own biography heightens the intensity of their experience,

⁸¹ Jameson, *Postmodernism*, p. 26.

⁸² Fredric Jameson, 'Postmodernism and Consumer Society', in *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader*, 3rd edn, ed. by David Lodge and Nigel Wood (Harlow: Pearson, 2008), pp. 542-554 (p. 549).

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

which 'comes before the subject with heightened intensity, bearing a mysterious and oppressive charge of affect'.⁸⁵ Jameson concludes:

The schizophrenic [...] is not only 'no one' in the sense of having no personal identity; he or she is also nothing, since to have a project means to be able to commit oneself to a certain continuity over time. The schizophrenic is thus given over to an undifferentiated vision of the world in the present.⁸⁶

Jameson's elucidation of the schizophrenic experience illuminates aspects of Dani's problematic sense of personal identity. Dani's lack of relationship to his personal origins suggests a disturbed sense of temporality akin to the one that Jameson describes. Like the schizophrenic, Dani proves unable to 'unify the past, present and future of his own biography', and develops a hypersensitivity to the symptoms of *Überlebensschuld* that suffuse his familial environment:⁸⁷

Die Eltern sagten nie, daß sie bloß für ihn überlebt hätten, doch er hörte ihr Seufzen, sah in den Augen des Vaters, daß sein Sohn der Vorwand ihrer Existenz hätte sein können, wenn die Toten dereinst fragen mochten, warum sie beide nicht ebenfalls umgebracht worden waren, und nachts, soviel wußte Dani Morgenthau, tauchten die Ermordeten in den Träumen seiner Alten auf und fragten sie aus. All ihre Gefühle von Schuld, er sog sie auf. (*M.*, p. 85)

Jameson's account of schizophrenic temporality provides an alternative way of approaching the mysterious tendency that Dani acquires during the course of his childhood. A number of critics have engaged already with Dani's pathological propensity to assume the guilt of others, and have noted that this stems from an over-identification with the wishes of his parents. Günther Scheidl, for example, claims that Dani's constant admissions of guilt are a result of his wish 'die Überlebensschuld der Eltern [...] auf sich [zu] laden'.⁸⁸ What Scheidl apparently misses in Dani's supernatural abilities, however, is the fact that these extend beyond a pathological compulsion to assume the guilt for crimes that he has not committed. Dani's particular *Schuldbekentnis*, 'ich war's, ich bin's gewesen, ich hab's getan' (*M.*, p. 161), is voiced usually in combination with a first-person description of the crime that he claims to be guilty of:

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 550.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 549.

⁸⁷ The term *Überlebensschuld* was coined by William G. Niederland, and centres on the question 'Warum habe ich das Unheil überlebt, während die anderen—die Eltern, Kinder, Geschwister, Freumknde—daran zugrunde gingen?', *Folgen der Verfolgung: Das Überlebenden-Syndrom; Seelenmord* (Frankfurt a.M.: Surhkamp, 1980), p. 232.

⁸⁸ Scheidl, 'Renaissance', p. 141.

Siebert reichte [dem Gefangenen] ein Bild 'Erkennen Sie diese Frau?' Der Häftling verneinte, doch Mullemann sagte, 'ich sah sie. Hörte ihr leises "bitte nicht", bevor ich ihr die Daumen in die Kehle drückte'. (*M.*, p. 251)

Taken together, these aspects of Dani's 'supernatural' talent suggest that it simultaneously recapitulates and reverses the effects of the breakdown in communicative memory that is visible in the narration of his upbringing. Rather than merely taking on the guilt for crimes that he has not committed, Dani's detailed, first-person accounts of the crimes themselves suggest that he momentarily assumes the identity of the relevant criminal. It is possible to draw parallels with Dani's childhood role as the 'Wiederkehr der ermordeten Verwandten' (*M.*, p. 36), which recurs here in inverse form. While Tonja's expectations of her grandson led her to suppress his own identity by projecting onto him those of her deceased relatives, Dani now involuntarily cannibalizes elements of other biographies in order to achieve a sense of personal identity. Dani's assumption of the criminal's identity affords him access to comprehensive, eye-witness memories of past events of the kind that his parents denied him during his childhood, thereby allowing him to recover momentarily the sense of temporality that Jameson believes is key to the coherence of personal identity. Indeed, it is only when reliving these crimes that Dani expresses any sense of self. His constant admissions of guilt involve a three-fold repetition of 'Ich', and are the only occasions in the novel when Dani refers to himself as such. Read with emphasis on Dani's reconstruction of the crimes that he admits guilt for, therefore, his apparently supernatural talent for detecting the guilt of others can be theorized in terms that are compatible with, but are not solely restricted to, the purely psychoanalytic. Dani's unique gift in fact allows him to restore to his own biography a provisional sense of temporal depth that enables him to affirm his own identity. Yet, in a reprise of the techniques that are visible in Rabinovici's initial narration of the *Kaffeehaus*, this sense of temporal depth is rendered inauthentic even before it emerges, for in order to achieve it, Dani is forced to appropriate elements of another subject's biography.

Rabinovici's examination of the interrelationship between communicative memory and personal identity thus evinces certain parallels with his representation of urban space. Both the city and the family have lost

their ability to bear effectively the burden of history. The survivor generation's lack of ability to work through the traumatic events of the Holocaust, and the guilt that they feel at having survived them, precipitates a situation whereby the second generation is denied access to the historical origins of its own lived present. In Dani's case, this lack of temporal depth attenuates his ability to 'organize the past, present and future of his own biography', and gives rise to a disorder that allows him to temporarily restore the connection to the past that his own identity lacks. As we have seen, however, this restoration of temporal depth is perforce ineffective, since the past that Dani internalizes is that of another subject.

Once more, however, it is possible to locate the circumstances that are responsible for the breakdown in communicative memory beyond the familial sphere. Matthias Beilein's reading of Dani's psychosomatic malady points up the extent to which the lack of depth that characterizes his own biography is the result of post-war Austrian memory politics. As I have noted, Beilein contends that Dani's transformation into Mullemann, which marks the point at which he succumbs fully to his compulsion to confess the crimes of others, is precipitated by the rejection of his father's application for compensation. Beilein claims:

Dani opfert sein 'Selbst' für seinen Vater: Er [...] lockt die Täter [...] aus der Deckung, aus dem Schweigen. Damit gelingt es ihm, obwohl er nicht konfrontativ und in diesem Sinn zweckgerichtet handelt, 'Einbekenntnis der Schuld' zu provozieren.⁸⁹

Beilein's reading of Dani's transformation underlines the extent to which Austria's memory politics contributes to the problematic situation in which the Second generation finds itself. By refusing to acknowledge the ordeals that the Jewish community endured in the course of the Holocaust, and Austria's complicity in them, the Austrian authorities ensure that the subject of Jewish victimhood, and therefore the Holocaust's position in the ancestral history of the second generation, remains taboo at the level of public discourse. Thus, the breakdown in communicative memory at familial level is replicated in the broader national context, so that the continued stability of Austria's victim

⁸⁹ Matthias Beilein, 'Unter falschem Namen: Schweigen und Schuld in Doron Rabinovici's *Suche nach M.*', *Monatshefte*, 97 (2005), pp. 250-269 (pp. 259-260).

thesis in post-Waldheim Vienna becomes a salient factor in the effacement of historical depth that characterizes the identities of the second generation.

As I suggested at the outset, however, Rabinovici offers his own take on Benjamin's redemptive method that provides a counterpoint to the depthlessness that is the over-riding characteristic of both the city and of subjectivity in *Suche nach M.* This redemptive method centres on the body's capacity to function as a dialectical image, corresponding to the conception of the historical object that provides the foundations for Benjamin's attempt to expose the mythic character of modernity.

THE BODY AND HISTORY

My foregoing reference to the function of the body in *Suche nach M.* is misleading, because the multiple bodies that the novel alludes to evince properties that correspond to different conceptualizations of the historical object. While Dani Morgenthau's body is inscribed with a relationship between the lived present and the past that corresponds to Benjamin's dialectical image, other bodies are by no means invulnerable to the kind of manipulation that is visible in Rabinovici's treatment of identity and of urban space. The role that 'the body' occupies in *Suche nach M.* is thus a profoundly ambivalent one. Before engaging with the body's function as a dialectical image, therefore, it is necessary to examine the other ways in which the body functions as a mediator of history, and the ways in which its capacity to carry out this function is disrupted in the course of the novel.

A common characteristic of the ways in which the body mediates history in *Suche nach M.* is their common foundation in the body's capacity to function as a signifying system. In the course of the previous chapter, I examined in detail the ways in which discourse inscribes itself on the body, forcing it in a number of ways to signify the social norms and hierarchies of a particular power/knowledge regime. *Suche nach M.*, meanwhile, underscores another aspect of the body's ability to signify. A brief examination of the multiple references to the bodies of individual characters that occur in *Suche nach M.* signals the emphasis that Rabinovici places on the body's ability to function as a

document of both individual and collective history. The body's status as an inscriptive surface that is marked with traces of its own past has been commented on extensively. Elizabeth Grosz, for example, notes:

Every body is marked by the history and specificity of its existence. It is possible to construct a biography, a history of the body, for each individual and social body. This history would include [...] all the contingencies that befall a body, impinging on it from the outside—a history of the accidents, illness, misadventures that mark the body and its functioning [...].⁹⁰

The emphasis that Grosz places on the specificity of the individual body's history here overlooks the fact that the traces and marks that are inscribed in the surface of the individual body can also function metonymically as traces of a collective historical experience, a circumstance to which the increasing currency of the term 'survivor body' in theoretical approaches to the legacy of the Holocaust might attest. The body's ability to bear witness to history, both individual and collective, constitutes it as a stereotypical historical object in Benjamin's sense, because the traces or symptoms that adorn its surface signal the existence of a layer of historical reality that is hidden beyond them. Accordingly, the body's function as a witness to history is founded on the operation of one of Jameson's key depth models, namely the relationship between signifier and signified. Perhaps predictably, however, the function of this depth model is problematized in a variety of ways in *Suche nach M.*, allowing Rabinovici to point up the ways in which Austrian public discourse works against the alternative interpretation of history that manifests itself in the bodies of Holocaust survivors and their children.

The body's ability to act as a document of collective history is signalled early on in the narrative, in the strand that relates to the upbringing of Arieħ Arthur Bein. Arieħ's father, Jakob Scheinowiz, insists that his son learn Tae Quan Do, so that he will be able to retaliate if he is ever hit. So insistent is Scheinowiz that Arieħ asks his mother whether he has been hit before. Her answer, which is forthcoming only after three days, is telling: 'Auf dem Rücken'—Die Narben' (*M.*, p. 49). The scars on Scheinowiz's back are a physical and permanent manifestation of a past about which he otherwise remains steadfastly silent, signifying the calamitous history of his own body, and

⁹⁰ Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Towards a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994), p. 142.

therefore the history of the millions of other bodies that were abused during the course of the Holocaust.

Moving beyond this limited example, the role of the body as a signifier of collective history is problematized more comprehensively in the narrative strand that relates to Dani's upbringing, specifically with reference to the particular situation in which Dani's father finds himself. Once more, the only remnants of Moscha Morgenthau's experience of the Holocaust are inscribed onto his body in the form of physical ailments brought on by the cramped conditions in his hiding place on the outskirts of Warsaw:

Der Vater sagte nichts, klagte bloß über seine Rückenschmerzen, berichtet von ärztlichen Gutachten, von den Knochenschäden, von den Verkrümmungen seiner Wirbelsäule und zeigte dem Sohn die Röntgenbilder seines Körpers, in welche die Stigmata seiner kindlichen Unbeweglichkeit eingezeichnet waren. (M., p. 29)

At a later juncture in the novel, the reader discovers that the x-rays that Morgenthau shows his son were included in the evidence that he presented to the Austrian authorities in support of his multiple applications for compensation. As we have already seen, however, these applications are consistently rejected:

In den Befunden war zu lesen, seine Gebrechen und Beschwerden, diese Auswirkungen seiner Verfolgung, die körperlichen Rückstände aus jener Zeit, wären nicht auf das Ausharren im Unterschlupf, weder auf Zwangsarbeit noch auf die Prügel im Lager zurückzuführen. (M., p. 243)

By rejecting Morgenthau's applications for an official acknowledgement of his status as victim, the Austrian authorities obstruct the body's ability to function effectively as an historical object, denying the veracity of the past that his ailments signify. The reports that Morgenthau receives from the authorities contain no reference to any other possible cause for his symptoms. The findings of the authorities therefore divest Moscha's body of its ability to function as a signifying system; his symptoms become floating signifiers that are left entirely bereft of a signified. Much like Rabinovici's representation of Vienna, therefore, the body emerges as de-historicized surface appearance, lacking the 'depth' that the symptoms visible on its surface would normally afford it.

Perhaps the most extensive, and indeed complex, examination of the role that the body plays in the mediation of the past, however, involves the various transformations that Dani Morgenthau undergoes in the course of the novel. It

is therefore necessary to look once more at these, scrutinizing them this time for the particular ways in which they manifest themselves at the level of corporeality. As the following description demonstrates, Dani's visceral reaction to the presence of a guilty party manifests itself most obviously in the appearance of an aggressive rash all over his body:

Sobald ein Täter in Dani Morgenthau's Anwesenheit sein Vergehen leugnete, begann jenes Gejucke über Danis Leib zu prasseln, konnte er es bloß mit Bekenntnissen lindern. Die Pusteln, Risse und Schrunden klangen erst ab, wenn er gestand, ein Lösungswort sprach, Fluch oder Selbstbezeichnung, wenn er bekannte, was nicht er, sondern ein anderer begangen hatte. (*M.*, p. 85)

In a more nuanced manifestation of the body's signifying capacity, the rash that the denial of a crime produces functions simultaneously as a document of both past and present conditions. In line with Freudian trauma theory, Dani's rash can be seen as a collection of fragments that signify a repressed past; it is important to note that Dani's rash is not triggered by the presence of a perpetrator, but rather the denial of his crime. More importantly, however, Dani's rash functions as a signifier of the guilt that invades the relevant criminal's present, a circumstance that becomes clearer after Dani's transformation into Mullemann. Bundled in bandages that conceal his malady, Mullemann wanders the streets of Vienna, accepting the guilt for crimes that he has not committed.

Er sprach die allgemeinen Gefühle der Scham an, fand jene Worte, die anderen fehlten, verzauberte die verschwiegen Befangenen in redlich Betroffene, richtet niemanden außer sich selbst (*M.*, p. 252)

The coalescence of past and present as inscribed on Dani's body endows it with characteristics that are akin to Benjamin's dialectical images. In order to understand this similarity, it is necessary to return briefly to Benjamin's conceptualization of the historical object, a construct that was key to his attempt to expose the mythic character of modernity. As I noted at the outset of the chapter, Benjamin aimed to recover the fragments of modernity's origins that were hidden beneath its mythic surface, and to realign their relationship with the lived present. It was through this realignment that Benjamin aimed to expose modernity as 'the culmination of the mythic in its most refined and pervasive form'. Benjamin saw this process as akin to an awakening. In a key passage from the early notes for the *Passagenarbeit*, he set out to differentiate

his own goals from those of the surrealists, whose work had provided the inspiration for his *magnum opus*:

Während Aragon im Traumbereiche beharrt, soll hier die Konstellation des Erwachens gefunden werden. Während Aragon ein impressionistisches Element bleibt—die Mythologie—[...] geht es hier um die Auflösung der 'Mythologie' in den Geschichtsraum. Das freilich kann nur geschehen durch die Erweckung eines noch nicht bewußten Wissen vom Gewesenen.⁹¹

In order to evoke the 'noch nicht bewusste Wissen vom Geschehenen' that would deactivate capitalism's mythic powers and wrest the dreaming collective from its slumber, Benjamin attempted to 'explode' the recovered fragments of modernity historical origins out of their original historical context and place them in dialectical relation with one another. This process created the 'dialectical image' As Buck-Morss suggests, this concept is 'over-determined' in Benjamin's work. However, one insight into its function does exist. In an entry in *Konvolut N*, Benjamin describes the dialectical image as

[...] Dialektik im Stillstand. Denn während die Beziehung der Gegenwart zur Vergangenheit eine rein zeitliche, kontinuierliche ist, ist die des Gewesenen zum Jetzt dialektisch: ist nicht Verlauf sondern Bild [,] sprunghaft—nur dialektische Bilder sind echte (d.h.: nicht archaische) Bilder [...].⁹²

These images, in which the past and present of the historical object collide, are made visible

[w]o das Denken in einer von Spannungen gesättigten Konstellation zum Stillstand kommt [...]. [Das dialektische Bild] ist die Zäsur in der Denkbewegung. [...] Sie ist [...] da zu suchen, wo die Spannung zwischen den dialektischen Gegensätzen am größten ist. De[m]nach ist der in der materialistischen Geschichtsdarstellung konstituierte Gegenstand selber das dialektische Bild. Es ist identisch mit dem historischen Gegenstand; es rechtfertigt seine Absprengung aus dem Kontinuum des Geschichtsverlaufs.⁹³

By combining on its surface manifestations of a hidden past and a present condition, Dani's body arguably fulfils the central criterion for a dialectical image. Yet this combination of past and present does not yet attest to the origins of the second generation's lived present. The fully revelatory potential of Dani's transformation, and the extent to which his body comes to conform to Benjamin's construct as a result of it, become clear only when taking into account a key parallel that the novel sets up between Dani's appearance as Mullemann and a mythical figure from Christian myth.

⁹¹ Benjamin, *Passagenwerk*, p. 1016.

⁹² Ibid., p. 577.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 595.

In the section of the novel that follows immediately from the account of Dani's transformation into Mullemann, his partner, art historian Sina Mohn, attends an art exhibition in a bank. The key exhibit is a painting entitled *Ahasver*. Although the painting is not described in detail, the account that the novel provides of its artists' technique gives an impression of its appearance

Erst zeichnete er [die Abgebildeten] ab, dann vermummte er die Skizzierten, kleisterte alle zu, malte ihnen Bandagen auf, verzierte den Mull mit Nadeln und Spangen, steckte Gliedmaßen in Stützverbände, verkürzte ein Bein zum Stumpf, unter dem sich eine Blutlache staute, preßte zuweilen elastische Binden, eine Wattebausch oder eine Schere in die Ölschicht, riß die Leinwand auf, um den Saum, die Schrundränder zu röten und mit Nähten zusammenzuflicken. Tapetenmuster im Hintergrund verwandelte Toot zu Striemen, zu Fleischlaschen. Pinselte er eine Glühbirne ab, schien sie die Form einer Eiterbeule anzunehmen und erinnerte an ein schwärendes Geschwür. (*M.*, p. 191)

Mullemann's similarity to the subjects depicted in these paintings is commented on by the artist himself; but in the case of *Ahasver* the similarities are such that Sina Mohn believes that the subject is Mullemann himself, suggesting that the representation is so accurate that it replicates the latter's 'geheimnisvolle Fähigkeiten'. This parallel between *Ahasver* and Mullemann is the key to the body's function as a dialectical image. As the novel makes clear, *Ahasver* is the Jewish shoe-maker who refused to allow Jesus to rest in front of his home while carrying his cross to Golgotha. Versions of the *Ahasver* myth date back to the twelfth century, but it was first written down in a chap-book that was published in Germany during the 1500s. In this version of the story, *Ahasver* was condemned because of his offence to wander eternally until the second coming. As König notes, *Ahasver* became emblematic in Christian mythology of the Jews' collective responsibility for the Crucifixion, and thus functioned as a powerful symbol of Christian Anti-Semitism.⁹⁴ Mullemann's similarity to *Ahasver* thus transforms him into an *Urbild* of Jewish persecution and suffering.

By inscribing itself onto Dani's body, this 'fragment' of history is blasted out of its original place in the historical continuum, and enters into a dialectical relationship with the 'new'. As we have seen, Dani, and the whole of the generation to which he belongs, were made responsible for the establishment of

⁹⁴ Cf. Eduard König, 'The Wandering Jew: Legend or Myth?', in *The Wandering Jew: Essays in the Interpretation of a Christian Legend*, ed. by Galat Hasan-Rokem, and Alan Dundes (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 11-26).

a post-Holocaust era characterized by Jewish emancipation and advancement. Dani's body also fulfils the second of Benjamin's conditions for the location of the dialectical image. As we have seen, his upbringing was characterized by a palpable tension between the present and a repressed past. In the figure of Dani Morgenthau, therefore, Rabinovici sets up another continuity that begins with the thirteenth-century figure of Ahasver and ends with the children of Holocaust survivors. The lived present is thereby exposed as mythic, because the discourse of Jewish victimhood in which its origins are located is shown to be based on a propagandistic construction. In accordance with Benjamin's conception of history, furthermore, the three-fold conflation of Dani, Ahasver and Mullemann obliterates the myth of historical progress. Ahasver's Germanophone epithet 'der Ewige Jude' exposes the lived present once more as an instance of the 'das Neue im Zusammenhang des immer schon Dagewesenen'.⁹⁵

Dani's transformation into Mullemann suggests that the subject, and more particularly the body, succeeds in *Suche nach M.* where the city and the family fail. In a society whose memory politics is shown to render both of these institutions devoid of their function as documents of historical evolution, the body becomes the only site to which history can effectively attach itself. Yet the body does not merely function as an historical object in the sense that it acquires historical depth. As the various historical references that encode themselves into Dani's corporeality suggest, the body is also capable of functioning dialectically. Dani's body allows the 'mythic' past not only to impinge on the lived present, but to combine with it in such a way as to expose its mythic foundations, thereby 'awakening the dreaming collective' from its slumber. This circumstance is manifest in the particular social role that Mullemann acquires later in the novel. After being recruited by the police to assist them in cracking hitherto unsolved cases, Mullemann becomes an international celebrity, and travels around Austria and making speeches that call for an end to the 'silence' that has befallen the nation since the end of the Second World War.

⁹⁵ Benjamin, *Das Passagenwerk*, p. 570.

Genug mit dem Lügen und Leugnen dieses Landes. Schluß mit dem Schweigen. Wir müssen Zeugnis ablegen, müssen künden: Ich war's, ich bin's gewesen, ich hab's getan'. Seine letzten Silben verklangen im Jubel der Menge. (*M.*, p. 252)

Mullemann's function as a collective 'Aufklärer' articulates precisely with Benjamin's observations regarding the effects of the dialectical image. By exposing the mythic origins of the lived present, Mullemann is able to enforce an authentic, political reckoning with a past that has remained 'unconscious' in Austria's collective memory. By exposing the mythic origins of the lived present, therefore, Mullemann is able to restore to it an authentic sense of historical depth.

CHAPTER FOUR

MASCULINITY AT THE MARGINS:

THE CITY, THE NATION AND THE MASCULINE

SUBJECT IN ARNO GEIGER'S *ES GEHT UNS GUT* (2005)

In December 2005, three months after Arno Geiger was awarded the inaugural *Deutscher Buchpreis* for his fourth novel, *Es geht uns gut* (2005),¹ Paul Jandl published an article in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* in which he proclaimed a 'Paradigmenwechsel' in contemporary Austrian writing.² The change in outlook that Jandl identifies is generational and impacts primarily on the socially-critical function of the literary text. Jandl's brief overview of Austrian literature published in the 1970s and 1980s highlights its political function during this period, as well as reiterating the key role that the representation of rural Austria played in it. In combination with 'das Avantgardische des sprachkritischen Schreibens', 'das Dokumentarische der Anti-Heimatliteratur' allowed Austrian writers to mount a 'politischer Widerstand gegen österreichische Wirklichkeiten'.³ Although Jandl's article only explicitly ascribes a political function to works produced during the 1970s and 1980s by a familiar group of writers including Bernhard, Jelinek, Handke, Scharang, Jonke, and Kolleritsch, its title locates the roots of Austrian literature's socially-critical tendency at the beginning of the 1960s. In the course of his observations, Jandl makes explicit reference to the 'Kernsatz' of Hans Lebert's *Die Wolfshaut*,⁴ which runs '[h]ier ist das Böse daheim. In diesen Tälern liegt es gut getarnt'.⁵ By reformulating this sentence in his chosen title, 'In diesen Tälern ist das Gute daheim', Jandl suggests that his 'Paradigmenwechsel' entails a move away from the conventions of the *Anti-Heimatroman*.

¹ Arno Geiger, *Es geht uns gut: Roman* (Munich; Vienna: Hanser, 2005). Further references to the novel will be given in the body text, identified as *Gut*.

² Paul Jandl, 'In diesen Tälern ist das Gute daheim', *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 17 December 2005 <<http://www.nzz.ch/2005/12/17/fe/articleDF3GS.html>> [Accessed 6 November 2011], para. 6.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., para. 5.

⁵ Hans Lebert, *Die Wolfshaut* (Munich: Classen, 1960), p. 523.

And so it does. Jandl characterizes the decision to award the Nobel Prize for Literature to Elfriede Jelinek in 2004 as a public acknowledgment of Austrian literature's 'therapeutische Zwecke',⁶ and notes that its timing coincided with the emergence of a 'new generation' of Austrian writers whose work contains no trace of either 'die politisch missbrauchte Sprache' or 'die brutale Provinz'.⁷ Jandl's observations on the work of the new generation divide it into two categories, each of which is associated with a pronounced topographical shift. First, Jandl notes that such novels as Daniel Kehlmann's *Die Vermessung der Welt* (2005)⁸ and Raoul Schrott's *Tristan da Cunha oder Die Hälfte der Erde* (2003)⁹ are set against the background of a global geography and history that reduces the Austrian *Heimat* 'zur Marginalie'.¹⁰ In the literature of the new generation, Jandl maintains, 'Österreich erzählt. Und es erzählt kaum noch von sich selbst'.¹¹

This mooted shift beyond the borders of Austria's national community reinforces the link that I identified in the introduction between the emergence of a new generation of Austrian writers and a change in the way that the Austrian nation is represented in the literary text. It suggests not only that the work of the 'new generation' contains no trace of the *Österreichskritik* that dominated Austrian writing of the 1970s and 1980s, but also that the social, political and cultural realities of present-day and historical Austria no longer provide a legitimate focus for literary exploration. As Jandl notes with reference to Kehlmann's work

[w]er [...] die deutsche Aufklärung an der Schwelle des 18. zum 19. Jahrhundert im Gepäck hat und sie zur grossen menschlichen Komödie ordnen kann, der wird den kleinteiligen österreichischen Gegenwartens entsagen.¹²

In the second half of his article, however, Jandl is forced to revise his assessment of Austria's much-reduced role in the literature of the 'new generation'. He notes that Austria and its history do, in fact, continue to occupy

⁶ Ibid., para. 7.

⁷ Ibid., para. 5.

⁸ Daniel Kehlmann, *Die Vermessung der Welt* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2005).

⁹ Raoul Schrott, *Tristan da Cunha oder Die Hälfte der Erde* (Munich: Hanser, 2004).

¹⁰ Jandl, 'Tälern', para. 7.

¹¹ Ibid., para. 8.

¹² Ibid., para. 6.

emerging authors, but contends that their work explores the nation and its past only 'im milden Schein der Lampe'.¹³ Jandl cites Eva Menasse's *Vienna* (2005)¹⁴ and Arno Geiger's *Es geht uns gut* as key examples of this tendency:

Eva Menasses 'Vienna' war Historie als Anekdote und Humor, und wenn Arno Geiger im breiten Strom seiner Prosa aus beinahe siebzig Jahren erzählt, dann sind seine Figuren keine Verdammten einer politischen Insel mehr, sondern alltägliche Liebende oder prototypische Einfaltspinsel. 'Es geht uns gut' ist Literatur in Hausschuhen. Mit grosser Gemächlichkeit schlurft sie durch die Gänge der Vergangenheit. Sie beobachtet genau und ist dabei grundsympathisch. 'Gefühlte Geschichte' nennen die Sozialpsychologen diesen Umgang mit der Historie.¹⁵

Despite their brevity, these observations obscure the terms of the paradigm shift that Jandl sets out to identify. Both *Es geht uns gut* and *Vienna* are, in fact, characteristic of a development in Austrian writing that runs contrary to authors' much-vaunted re-discovery of the international context. As its title suggests, Menasse's novel, much like Geiger's, is emblematic of the urban turn. Its traces are also visible in works by Thomas Glavinic, Susanne Gruber, Martin Prinz, Clemens Berger and Thomas Stangl, all of whom have been said to belong to Austrian literature's 'new generation'.¹⁶ But as well as evincing an interest in Vienna as *Erzählort*, *Vienna* and *Es geht uns gut* share another characteristic. Both novels have been held up as examples of a 'neue Lust am Familienroman' that emerged in Germanophone literature during the middle of the last decade.¹⁷ Thus, the second tendency that Jandl identifies apparently stands in direct contradiction to the first. While such writers as Schrott and Kehlmann search beyond Austria's borders for material that might form a productive foundation for their literary projects, the examination of Austria's history that takes place in the novels of Menasse and Geiger is conducted from within the confines of the private sphere.

While much has been made in recent press responses of Austrian literature's gradual internationalization, the renewed interest in the family that

¹³ Ibid., para. 8.

¹⁴ Eva Menasse, *Vienna* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2005).

¹⁵ Ibid., para. 8.

¹⁶ Cf. Klaus Zeyringer, *Österreichische Literatur seit 1945: Überblicke: Einschnitte: Wegmarken*, pp. 509-512.

¹⁷ Volker Von Hage, 'Wühlarbeit im Haus der Ahnen', *Der Spiegel*, 29 August 2005 <<http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-41583147.html>> [Accessed 6 November 2011], para. 11.

Jandl identifies in the works of Geiger and Menasse has not generated the same degree of critical attention. Yet the prominence of the private sphere in these works prefigures a more pronounced turn inward that became evident in the wake of Austrian literature's much-debated 'Jahrhundertherbst' in 2007.¹⁸ Writing in 2008 in the Austrian daily, *Der Standard*, Stefan Gmünder noted that many novels published during the previous year had been marked by an increased interest in 'das Private und Individuelle'.¹⁹ Once more, the 'new generation' of Austrian authors stood at the forefront of this development. Gmünder identifies traces of the inward turn in Thomas Glavinic's *Das bin doch ich*,²⁰ Sabine Gruber's *Über Nacht*,²¹ and *Ein Paar* by Martin Prinz,²² all of which are set, either in whole or in part, in the Austrian capital.

The turn inward that Jandl and Gmünder identify has potentially serious consequences for the trajectory of the socially-critical tendency in Austrian writing. Jandl's observations in particular suggest that the filter provided by the familial sphere facilitates a measured account of Austrian history that does not entail the acerbic, satirical social criticism that characterized novels produced during the 1970s and 1980s. As Jandl maintains in the conclusion of his article:

Österreich erzählt.—Das kann in einem Land, das sich über seine internationalen Scheinwirkungen oft nicht ganz im Klaren ist, auch eine Drohung sein. Diesmal, im Fall von Arno Geiger, Daniel Kehlmann, Raoul Schrott und allen anderen, die den Buchmarkt neu aufrollen, ist die Sache harmlos. Endlich: Österreich erzählt.²³

Read against the backdrop of Austria's literary history, however, Jandl's observations here set alarm bells ringing. An overriding concern with the private sphere and with the individual subject is hardly a new development in Austrian writing. But as I showed in the introduction, the 'Reise ins eigene ich' that critics observed in key *Anti-Heimatromane* published during the 1970s led

¹⁸ The expression 'Jahrhundertherbst' is often attributed mistakenly to Paul Jandl, whose article 'Das sind doch wir' contended that Austrian literature could anticipate 'ein furioser Herbst'. Cf. Paul Jandl, 'Das sind doch wir: der österreichische Literatur steht vor einem furiosen Herbst', *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 25 August 2007.

¹⁹ Stefan Gmünder, 'Prägend ist das Private', *Der Standard*, 28-29 December 2007 <<http://derstandard.at/3164627>> [Accessed 6 July 2011], para. 6.

²⁰ Thomas Glavinic, *Das bin doch ich* (Munich: Hanser, 2007).

²¹ Sabine Gruber, *Über Nacht* (Munich: Beck, 2007).

²² Martin Prinz, *Ein Paar* (Vienna: Jung & Jung, 2007).

²³ Jandl, 'Tälern', p. 10.

them to define novels such as Franz Innerhofer's *Schöne Tage*,²⁴ Gerd Jonke's *Geometrischer Heimatroman*,²⁵ and Josef Winkler's *Menschenkind* as examples of 'Neuer Subjektivismus'.²⁶ As I have noted already, this generic labelling led critics to overlook the socially-critical aspects of the novels in question. Thus, the link that Jandl perceives in the work of the new generation between an increased interest in the private sphere and the emergence of a more balanced, sympathetic attitude to Austrian history cannot stand without further examination.

1. This chapter therefore interrogates the terms of Jandl's 'Paradigmenwechsel'. Having concentrated in my reading of *Wiener Passion* on the representation of the female subject and her interaction with urban space, I turn my attention in my reading of Geiger's novel to the construction of masculinities. I argue that Geiger uses the representation of multiple masculinities in *Es geht uns gut* as a means of engaging critically with Austrian history and its detrimental effects on the generation of the *Nachgekommenen*. The representations of masculinity in *Es geht uns gut* feed into the contemporary debate surrounding the 'crisis' of masculinity. For each of Geiger's protagonists, this 'crisis' is the product, in whole or in part, of the relationship between the familial and the national on the one hand and, on the other, of the masculine protagonists' problematic relationships with the two domains. As statesman and soldier respectively, Richard Sterk and Peter Erlach are both involved directly in events that shape Austria's history. More importantly, however, each occupies a subject position that is central to the maintenance of nationalism as an exclusively masculine project. Yet Geiger's portrayals of Richard and Peter undermine these 'nationalist' masculinities by juxtaposing both protagonists' functions at the level of nation with their actions in the familial sphere. This juxtaposition allows Geiger to explore the ways in which the subject is exploited by, and

²⁴ Franz Innerhofer, *Schöne Tage: Roman* (Salzburg: Residenz, 1974).

²⁵ Gerd Jonke, *Geometrischer Heimatroman* (Frankfurt a.M.: 1969).

²⁶ Josef Winkler, *Menschenkind* (Frankfurt a.M.; Suhrkamp, 1984). 'Neuer Subjektivismus' is defined by Klaus Zeyringer in his *Innerlichkeit und Öffentlichkeit: zur österreichischen Literatur der achtziger Jahre* (Tübingen: Franke, 1992), p. 91.

conversely is able to exploit, the tumultuous regime changes that characterize Austrian history. Philipp Erlach, meanwhile, inhabits a configuration of contemporary Vienna in which the 'crisis' of masculinity has evolved. In Philipp's Vienna, the social and institutional structures that legitimated and sustained the masculine subject positions occupied by his older relatives are shown to have decayed. Contemporary Austrian masculinity is figured here as the product of a culture in which gender relations have been re-arranged, the nature of work has been transformed, and the concept of nation itself has been eroded. Consequently, the relationship between the national and the familial is problematized in the figure of Philipp in a manner that calls into question the role of masculinity in contemporary conceptions of national identity.

'NEUN TAGE FÜR EIN HALBES JAHRHUNDERT'.

Es geht uns gut focuses on the Sterk family, a Viennese *Bürgerfamilie* resident in a villa on the outskirts of the city's thirteenth district, Hietzing. The novel comprises snapshots of the Sterks' everyday lives over three generations, and takes the form of a *Rahmenerzählung*, whose framing narrative is focalized by writer Philipp Erlach. Philipp's account is split into thirteen chapters, each of which narrates the events of a single day between April and June 2001. After inheriting the family villa from his recently-deceased grandmother, Philipp sets about clearing it of the debris that has accumulated there, thereby eradicating all traces of its previous occupants. The most onerous task is clearing out the attic, which has become home to a flock of pigeons. Ultimately, the work proves overwhelming, and Philipp is forced to accept the help of two *Schwarzarbeiter*, Atamanov and Steinwald, who are supplied by his girlfriend, Johanna Haug. Encouraged by the *Schwarzarbeiter* to leave them to work, Philipp spends most of his time deep in thought on the villa's front steps, scribbling his musings into a notebook.

The form of the embedded narrative mimics the frame: it contains nine flashbacks, each of which occupies a single chapter, headed with a different

date. With the exception of the first, these chapters are presented chronologically, so that the plot traverses the last six decades of the twentieth century. Each decade is represented metonymically by a single day, whose events are focalized by one of Philipp's older relatives. The dates in question typically fall during or close to a landmark event in Austrian history from the *Anschluss* onwards. The chronological flashbacks are framed in turn by two chapters that are focalized by Philipp's grandmother, Alma Sterk, and set in the 1980s.

The novel's narrative structure provides the focus for several press-reviews,²⁷ which give illuminating—if contradictory—accounts of the ways in which its formal features mediate the relationship between the *grand récit* of Austrian history and the Sterk family's *petit histoire*. Harald Klauhs is acerbic in his criticism of Geiger's over-reliance on the myths and clichés associated with Austrian history. Noting that the novel's publication coincided somewhat conveniently with the celebrations for the fiftieth anniversary of the Second Republic's establishment, Klauhs contends that

[...] Geiger fährt historische Daten der Zweiten Republik ab und lässt dabei kaum einen Mythos aus, der für die Republikfeiern von Bedeutung sein könnte. Er beschreibt etwa den passiven Widerstand des christlichsozialen Richard gegen die bösen Nazis in den Dreißigerjahren, den heldenhaften Kampf des hochgradigen Hitlerjungen Peter gegen die Rote Armee, und den feministischen Aufstand der engagierten Ingrid (Philipps Mutter) gegen die patriarchale und postnazistische Gesellschaft der Fünfzigerjahre. Uff!²⁸

This description of the novel is problematic, however, in its failure to take into account the subjective nature of the literary text. This omission leads Klauhs to gauge the political implications of *Es geht uns gut* exclusively on the basis of the particular historical events that Geiger portrays. Klauhs's focus on content overlooks the fact that any event can be portrayed either affirmatively or critically, albeit with greater or lesser aesthetic skill.

As Franz Haas's review suggests, engagement with the question of form in fact produces an account that contradicts the one offered by Klauhs. In an assessment of *Es geht uns gut* that in part approximates Paul Jandl's, Haas notes

²⁷ The dearth of scholarly responses to Geiger's novel means that the press reviews that it generated on its publication remain the main source of critical material on the novel.

²⁸ Harald Klauhs, 'Spiegelfechtere: Monopoly für Anfänger', *Die Presse*, 15 October 2005 <<http://diepresse.com/?channel=sp&ressort=S101&id=512883>> [Accessed 10 July 2010], para. 5.

that Geiger ‘vermeidet Klischees zur Geschichte ebenso konsequent wie das abgedroschene giftige Urteil über die Gegenwart’, and contends that the latter’s ‘vierjährige Arbeit an dem Werk’ renders its publication ‘im Gedenkjahr’ a mere coincidence.²⁹ Along with Michaela Schmitz, Haas also notes that the chronological structure of Geiger’s novel in fact draws its reader’s focus away from the historical events whose narration Klauhs criticizes; the plot, Haas maintains, ‘zielt immer knapp an den großen historischen Eckdaten vorbei’.³⁰ For Schmitz, this ‘verblüffender Effekt, den Arno Geiger [...] zum Erzählprinzip macht’ allows him to focus on ‘die alltäglichsten und gewöhnlichsten Begebenheiten, Situationen und Umstände, all diese [...] “Kleinigkeiten, die so sehr ins Gewicht fallen”’.³¹ But, much like Jandl, both Schmitz and Haas underestimate the extent to which the novel’s protagonists are both involved in and affected by the historical events against which Geiger’s exploration of the Sterk family is set. A case in point is that of Peter Erlach, who is wounded while defending Vienna from the Russian forces at the end of the Second World War. Richard Sterk’s position as a Minister in the cabinet of Leopold Figl, meanwhile, affords him a key role in the negotiations for the *Staatsvertrag* of 1955. Hence, though Geiger certainly occupies himself with aspects of everyday family life that might be considered ‘gewöhnlich’, the roles that Peter, and particularly Richard, play in events at national level mean that the family in question cannot legitimately be described as such.

Although the emphasis that Schmitz places on Geiger’s engagement with the familial sphere contradicts Klauhs’s suggestion that he privileges Austria’s historical meta-narrative, both critics’ assessments are based on a reductive reading of the relationship that the novel sets up between the familial and the national spheres. Klauhs and Schmitz both imply that *Es geht uns gut* constructs a dualistic relation between the two domains, with each critic suggesting that the novel valorizes a different aspect of that dualism. The contradictory

²⁹ Franz Haas, ‘Sieben Jahrzehnte und acht Jahrestage’, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 27 September 2005 <<http://www.nzz.ch/2005/09/27/fe/articleD4K8B.html>> [Accessed 10 July 2010], para. 1.

³⁰ Haas, ‘Sieben Jahrzehnte’, para. 2.

³¹ Michaela Schmitz, ‘Neun Tage für ein halbes Jahrhundert’, *Büchermarkt*, 28 August 2005 <<http://www.dradio.de/dlf/sendungen/buechermarkt/411611/>> [Accessed 05 July 2010], para. 2.

readings that this model produces, however, suggest that it cannot account adequately for the relationship between the family and the nation in *Es geht uns gut*. Rather than treating them as independent terms within a hierarchy, I argue in what follows that Geiger in fact presents the familial and the national—and the masculinities that operate in each domain—at once as mutually implicative and mutually dependent. The interaction between the two domains is bound up inextricably with the novel's narrated topography, which is dominated by the Sterks' villa and its surroundings. As I demonstrate in the next section, the villa's location, its contents and its isolation from the city at large each have far-reaching implications for our understanding of the interaction between nation and family in *Es geht uns gut*.

BETWEEN THE NATIONAL AND THE FAMILIAL: THE SUBURB AS HETEROTOPIA

In terms of its narrated topography, *Es geht uns gut* occupies a unique position in the corpus of texts explored in this thesis. While the remainder of the novels under discussion focus on events that occur in the city of Vienna itself, the vast majority of the action that is narrated in *Es geht uns gut* takes place in the Sterks' suburban home. The tendency that I identified in Rabinovici's *Suche nach M.* to suppress topographical information is repeated in *Es geht uns gut*, albeit through recourse to a different set of strategies. While Rabinovici's narrator occasionally provides information that allows the precise location of a setting to be determined, for example, Geiger's gives enough detail to permit only the most approximate mapping of the villa's surroundings:

Johanna kommt vom Fernsehzentrum, das schiffartig am nahen Küniglberg liegt, oberhalb des Hietzinger Friedhofs und der streng durchdachten Gartenanlage von Schloß Schönbrunn. (*Gut*, p. 7)

This gloss locates the villa in Vienna's thirteenth district, Hietzing. In order to determine the significance of this area for an understanding of the relationship between the national and the familial in *Es geht uns gut*, we must examine briefly the changes that Vienna underwent after the construction of the *Ringstraße* at the end of the nineteenth century, and in particular the ways in which these changes altered the distribution of Vienna's population across the city. Carl Schorske's landmark examination of the *Ringstraße* equates its

development with 'The Birth of Urban Modernism' in Vienna.³² The *Ringstraße* was built on the site of Vienna's thirteenth-century fortifications, which were intended to protect the city from incursion, but also had the effect of insulating the *Innere Stadt* from its *Vororte*. While providing in the first instance a visual and architectural manifestation of bourgeois liberal culture and values,³³ the 'zivile Bebauung' of the glacis also provided a convenient solution to the housing crisis that had emerged as a result of the rapid expansion of Vienna's population during the late nineteenth century.³⁴

Drawing extensively on Schorske's work, Wolfgang Maderthaner and Lutz Musner explore how the development of the *Ringstraße* altered the social demographics of Vienna's outer districts. Having been 'pushed out of the inner city by rising land values and rents',³⁵ the 'old middle classes' took up residence in the districts to the South and West, which consequently established themselves as Vienna's 'Beamten- und bürgerlichen Wohnquartiere'.³⁶ This development had consequences further afield: it necessitated 'einen weiteren Exmittierungsschub der Unterschichtsangehörigen in die Außenbezirke'.³⁷ As Madethaner and Musner implicitly suggest, these developments meant that Vienna's social topography took on a distinctly disciplinary character; the population of Vienna was segregated strictly according to its membership of a particular social class:

Die komplexe Differenzierung zwischen Zentrum, inneren und äußeren Vorstädten entspricht einer Herrschaftsgestaltung des sozialen Raumes [...]. Bis zur Jahrhundertwende war ein stabiler Ring von dicht bebauten Arbeitsvorstädten und die Innengürtelbezirke und die Innenstadt gezogen.³⁸

Significant for our understanding of *Es geht uns gut* are the districts that escaped integration into the 'Herrschaftsnarrativ' that Madethaner and Musner formulate. Among these was the suburb (*Vorort*) Hietzing, which was integrated

³² Carl Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Knopf, 1980).

³³ Cf. Wolfgang Maderthaner and Lutz Musner, *Anarchie der Vorstadt: Das andere Wien um 1900*, 2nd edn (Vienna: Campus Verlag, 2001), p. 53: 'In der Anlage der Ringstraße [vereinigten sich] militärische Erwägungen mit dem Bedürfnis eines zur politischen Herrschaft aufsteigenden Bürgertums nach einem monumentalen, repräsentativen Boulevard'.

³⁴ Maderthaner and Musner note that the population of Vienna grew by 40% between 1830 and 1850, while accommodation in the city increased by only 10%. Cf. *Vorstadt*, p. 52.

³⁵ Eve Blau, *The Architecture of Red Vienna, 1919-1934* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), p. 51.

³⁶ Madethaner and Musner, *Vorstadt*, p. 54.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

into Vienna's municipal territory in 1850. Rather than housing Vienna's *Unterschichten*, Hietzing was home to 'einer auch quantitativ nennenswerten Konzentration von Angehörigen der gehobenen Mittelschicht'.³⁹ Three factors were responsible for this anomaly. First, the *Stadtbahn*, which was constructed during the late 1890s, provided a swift connection between the suburbs and the *Innere Stadt*, a connection of which, furthermore, only those with adequate financial resources were able to avail themselves.⁴⁰ Second, Hietzing was close to the Habsburgs' summer residence, *Schloß Schönbrunn*. Third, and most significant, the area was home to one of the city's exclusive *Cottages*. These residential developments, which were constructed by the *Wiener Cottage-Verein* under the chairmanship of Heinrich Ferstel, offered members of the middle classes a healthier alternative to Viennese city living. Key in this undertaking was the construction of residences based on the English country house. The *Cottage-Verein* cited as its goal:

[...] keine Bauten auszuführen, welche auch nur einem der übrigen Cottagebesitzer die freie Aussicht, das Licht und den Genuss frischer Luft benehmen würden, ferner keinerlei Gewerbe auf diesen Realitäten zu betreiben oder durch andere betreiben zu lassen, welches vermöge der Erzeugung von Dünsten oder üblen Gerüchen, vermöge des damit verbundenen Lärms oder möglicher Feuersgefahr den Nachbarn belästigen würde.⁴¹

The circumstances that underpinned the anomalous demographic composition of Hietzing are of considerable relevance for an interpretation of the narrated topography of *Es geht uns gut*. Geiger's decision to set the novel in the thirteenth district evokes dualisms that at once reinforce and complicate the relationship between the nation and the family. Implicit in the foregoing quotation, for example, is the regressive mentality that has been identified repeatedly in the Austrian literature of the late nineteenth century, and which found its most concrete expression in the original *Heimatromane*. The *Cottageviertel* were symptomatic of a desire to escape the ravages of the modern city and return to an idyllic lifestyle that was grounded in proximity to nature, and was thus associated more readily with the countryside. Access to

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 56.

⁴¹ 'Geschichte des Cottagevierstels' [*sic.*], <http://www.cottageverein.at/Content/Main_History.html>, [Accessed 6 November 2011], para. 3.

this alternative lifestyle was granted only to those with the necessary financial means, and was therefore limited to the upper and middle classes. In many respects, therefore, the suburb provided an extension both of the bourgeois interior and of the rural idyll. Rather than asserting their identities as private individuals by withdrawing to the protection of their over-furnished apartments, members of the bourgeoisie could now isolate themselves in exclusive communities on the city's periphery. The emergence of the suburb thus reactivated, in minimally altered form, the conventional opposition of metropolis and province of the (anti-) *Heimatroman*.

The opposition of suburb and city, and their isolation from one another, are replicated in *Es geht uns gut* at the level of narrated topography. Regardless of the historical period under scrutiny, the villa and its suburban surroundings remain separate from Vienna itself. The only character who undertakes the journey from suburb to city is Richard Sterk, yet the narrator provides no account of his route from home to work. Nor is the reader given any first-hand insight into Richard's working life: his ministerial duties are only ever related on his return home, either in conversation with Alma or by means of interior monologue. Richard's unnecessarily protracted journey home from the *Dunkelsteiner Wald* is narrated in a similar fashion. Although the narrator's description of Richard's precise trajectory is characteristically sketchy, its initial stages are recounted in the most detail; Vienna itself is mentioned only parenthetically in connection with the time that Richard returns home. Ingrid Sterk's bike-ride through the suburbs, by contrast, is described in some detail. The narrator notes that '[...] statt mit dem Fahrrad zur Hietzinger Brücke und von dort mit der Stadtbahn zu fahren, schlägt sie den Weg via Lainz und die Fasangartengasse nach Meidling ein (*Gut*, p. 152). Much like Rabinovici's Vienna, therefore, the narrated city of *Es geht uns gut* is reduced largely to an absent presence. While brief allusions to Vienna allow the reader to orientate herself in the novel's topography, the city itself provides the central setting for only two of its chapters. This masking of Vienna's urban space thus reduces the hierarchy of narrated places in the 'historical' sections of *Es geht uns gut* to two terms, namely the domestic on the one hand and the national on the other.

My foregoing observations seem at first glance to endorse the dualistic relationship between nation and family identified in press responses to the novel. Yet the implications of the villa's suburban location and of its isolation from the city become more complex when considered alongside the objects that the house itself contains. At the beginning of the novel, Johanna cajoles Philipp into giving her a tour of the villa, during which she interrogates him about furnishings and ornaments which, it transpires, occupy a privileged position in the Sterk family's collective memory. These include a cannonball of unknown provenance found lying on the landing, photographs of Philipp's deceased mother, and items of furniture that are inexplicably fixed to the floor. As the novel progresses, the reader discovers that the resonance of these objects in fact transcends the familial sphere. The cannonball, for example, is associated in the Sterks' collective memory with the *Türkenkriege* of the fourteenth century; the photographs of Philipp's mother, meanwhile, show her in her role as a *Statistin* in the Austrian cult *Heimatsfilm Der Hofrat Geiger*; finally, the reader discovers that the furniture was nailed down at the end of the Second World War to prevent it from being stolen by looters. The Sterks' family photographs and ornaments, along with the villa's fixtures and fittings, therefore, are not associated exclusively with the family's *petit histoire*, but are also markers of key events in the *grand récit* of Austrian history. Rather than existing in opposition to one another, the Sterks' villa is a space in which the national and the familial coalesce, a tendency that we will find replicated in the masculine identities of the novel's central male protagonists.

The presence in the villa of objects that denote key events in Austrian history or keystones of Austrian cultural production suggests that it might fulfil a function similar to that of the *Anti-Heimat* province. As Klaus Zeyringer has shown, it is by no means unheard of for Austrian writers to use settings other than the provincial village as models for Austrian society at large. Zeyringer notes:

[...] wie literarische Figuren, die Rollen ausprobieren (Koflers Erzähler "ich als...") dekliniert Österreich Bilder-Land-Möglichkeiten: Österreich als Wirtshaus, Österreich als Boden untoter Geschichte(n).⁴²

⁴² Klaus Zeyringer, *Österreichische Literatur seit 1945: Überblicke, Einschnitte, Wegmarken* (Salzburg: Studienverlag, 2008), p. 423.

Yet the amalgamation in one site of national and domestic space is incompatible with the dualistic relationship between microcosm and macrocosm on which Zeyringer's 'Bilder-Land-Möglichkeiten' depend. Of greater relevance for my reading of Geiger's novel (and of the villa's symbolic status within it), is the second, more complex variant of the same convention that Zeyringer identifies. Extending the metaphor of Austria as 'Bild', he observes that

[d]erartige Gemälde können selbst wiederum einen Raum der Möglichkeit möblieren—Österreich und die verschiedenen historischen und gegenwärtigen Interdependenzen als Museum: Ein Heimatmuseum des Totalitarismus in Gerhard Fritschs *Fasching*, eine räumliche Bilderkonzentration im Kunsthistorischen Museum als Rahmen der Scheltreden in Thomas Bernhards *Alte Meister*, ein Museum als Arbeitsplatz von Aufsehern in Michael Scharangs Satire *Auf nach Amerika*, die gefälschte Bilderwelt in Waldmüllersaal in *Schratt* von Antonio Fian, die Zusammenhänge im Museum deutscher Geschichte bei Werner Kofler.⁴³

I quote Zeyringer in some detail here because his comments reinforce the long-standing link in post-war Austrian writing between the spaces that he designates 'Räume der Möglichkeit' and the tradition of *Österreichkritik*. But despite their apparent pervasiveness in the works of Austrian writers, Zeyringer does not provide a detailed description of the spaces to which he refers. Comparison with Michel Foucault's observations in his seminal essay 'Of Other Spaces', however, reveals that the institutions listed in the foregoing quotation each exhibit characteristics fundamental to the heterotopia. Significantly, this is also true of the Sterks' villa, which adheres to two of the six 'principles' of the heterotopia that Foucault lays out. First, the amalgamation in the villa of objects that are symbolic of both the familial and the national sphere resonates with Foucault's contention that the heterotopia 'is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible'.⁴⁴ Meanwhile, the presence of objects relating to different historical periods links the villa 'to different slices in time', allowing it to 'open out onto [...] heterochronies'.⁴⁵ This connection is reinforced by the villa's role as catalyst for the production of the novel's historical narratives.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 424.

⁴⁴ Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', trans. by Jan Miskowiec, *diacritics*, 16 (1986), 22-27 (p. 25).

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 26.

The villa's conformity to the principles of heterotopia is significant for two reasons. First, it undermines the suggestion implicit in Jandl's article that a radical break exists between the critical novels of the seventies and eighties and the work of the 'new generation'. As Zeyringer's comments suggest, Geiger's reliance on the principles of heterotopia in his re-telling of Austrian history links him—albeit exclusively at the level of narrative topography—to the tradition of socially-critical writing from which Jandl attempts to distance the author. More significant, though, is the potential for renegotiation that Foucault ascribes to the heterotopia. He defines heterotopias as '[...] something like counter-sites [...] in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found in the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted'.⁴⁶ The villa's heterotopian characteristics thus reinforce its suitability as a space for the renegotiation of the masculinities that are produced in the spaces external to it. Before exploring this process of renegotiation, however, I examine briefly the normative relationship between masculinity and nation, and develop a framework through which the portrayal of masculinities in *Es geht uns gut* might usefully be assessed.

THEORIZING MULTIPLE MASCULINITIES

The mutually-supportive relationship between masculinity and the nation has been well documented, and needs only brief explication here. Joane Nagel's 'Masculinity and Nationalism' provides a useful departure-point.⁴⁷ Nagel identifies two factors that sustain the link between masculinity and nationalist politics. First, she maintains, 'the national state is essentially a masculine institution'.⁴⁸ Second, 'the culture of nationalism is constructed to emphasize and resonate with masculine cultural themes'.⁴⁹ Stephen M. Whitehead concurs broadly with Nagel's second point: he defines the 'idea of empire' as '[the most] potent symbol of the heroism, potency, mythology and mystery of the male

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 25.

⁴⁷ Joane Nagel, 'Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 21 (1998), 242-69.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 251.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

public domain'.⁵⁰ Whitehead points out that 'few, if any, empires have not been founded on the real/and or mythological acts of men',⁵¹ so that 'a people's sense of themselves as a nation is sustained, in part, through eulogizing the masculine performances of certain men'.⁵²

A striking characteristic of critical investigations into masculinity's connection with nationalism is the extent to which they concentrate on politics and the military. In the editor's preface to a collection of essays that takes the politics/war nexus as its departure point, Stefan Dudnik, Karen Haagemann and John Tosh note that the two domains 'have become seemingly "natural" homelands for masculinity'.⁵³ Subsequent essays focus primarily on attempts to politicize acts of military heroism in order to propagate patriotic sentiment, and the complementary instrumentalization of effeminacy in representations of political 'enemies'. Significantly, the essays provide comprehensive analyses of the soldier's body, while the corporeality of the politician disappears from view. John Horne notes that although politicians facilitate the dissemination of patriotic sentiment by determining which acts of (military) heroism are instrumentalized in its propagation, they themselves are unlikely to provide the 'masculine symbols' with which a nation identifies. As Horne proceeds to show, however,

[...] moments of crisis such as those brought about by war and revolution in the twentieth century generated abnormal, 'charismatic' forms of authority [...] which were based on the miraculous aura of the leader who promised a religious type of transcendence.

'Charismatic authority', Horne continues,

[...] is not intrinsically masculine. But its emergence through the breakdown of national values and identities that had partly been construed in terms of masculinity, and in crises dominated by war, enabled charismatic figures to fashion an unstable political authority in terms of radically accentuated masculinity.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Steven M. Whitehead, *Men and Masculinities: Key Themes and New Directions* (Cambridge: Polity, 2002), pp. 120-121.

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 121-122.

⁵² Ibid., p. 121.

⁵³ Stefan Dudnik et al. 'Editor's Preface', in *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*, ed. by Stefan Dudnik et al. (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. xii-xv (p. xii).

⁵⁴ John Horne, 'Masculinity in Politics and War in the Age of Nation-States', in *Masculinities in Politics and War*, ed. by Dudnik et al., pp. 22-40 (p.30).

Several key points arise from the foregoing observations. First, Horne's suggestion that 'crises' such as war can facilitate the emergence of alternative masculinities is significant when read against the background of twentieth-century Austrian history. As I show in what follows, the regime changes that punctuate the period narrated in *Es geht uns gut* necessitate the redefinition of the masculine discourses placed at the disposal of the masculine subject. Also of note is the focus on the soldier and the statesman in critical discourse on the relationship between masculinity and nation, subject positions occupied by Peter Erlach and Richard Sterk respectively. Geiger's exposition of these characters, however, hollows out political and military masculinities by juxtaposing them throughout the novel with forms of masculinity that originate in the domestic sphere.

In order to understand the mechanisms that underpin this strategy, I turn now to the exploration of the masculine subject contained in the final chapter of Whitehead's *Men and Masculinities*. Drawing on the work of Judith Butler, Whitehead states that the masculine subject is brought into being through a circulatory process of (self)-signification, whereby 'discourses of sex and gender [go] to work on the subject and [are] taken up by the subject'.⁵⁵ 'For those subjects rendered male', Whitehead notes, 'the discourses most likely to be placed at their disposal are masculine in their signification'.⁵⁶ These masculine discourses are to be understood as 'dominant cultural knowledges and truths [...] concerning how to live and perform as a (heterosexual) male'.⁵⁷

Significant in Whitehead's description of the masculine subject is his suggestion that the discourses which structure and govern the performance of masculinity are contingent on the 'particular localized setting' in which the performance takes place. 'For the researcher into gender and masculinity', Whitehead contends,

[...] it is necessary [...] to enter those places inhabited by men to discover how masculinities are acted out and understood [...] but in so doing, remaining cognizant of the fact that what one is 'seeing' is only a small part of a masculine subject's repertoire of masculinities, not to assume, for example, that the form of masculinity on display at a football match inevitably and directly correlates

⁵⁵ Whitehead, *Men*, p. 208.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 210.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

to the forms of masculinity displayed, by the same subject, at work or in the family setting.⁵⁸

Whitehead's contention thus constitutes masculinities as plural phenomena, which emerge as a result of the way in which the discourses structuring a particular space work on the subject. Together with Whitehead's reference to the 'repertoire of masculinities' at the masculine subject's disposal, the implication that masculinities themselves are spatially contingent suggests the possibility of tracing a distinct 'geography of masculinities' for every masculine subject.

Yet Whitehead's account evinces one significant omission. In his attempt to distance himself from the concept of 'hegemonic masculinity', which has gained considerable currency since it was first formulated in 1986,⁵⁹ Whitehead overlooks the fact that individual masculine performances will necessarily approximate the discursive construction that operates in a given environment to varying degrees, a circumstance that necessarily produces a 'hierarchy' of masculinities. In the section of *Discipline and Punish* entitled 'Normalizing Judgement', Foucault describes the system of punishment and privilege that operated in the *Ecole Militaire*. Cadets were divided into classes, which were assigned epithets that ranged from 'very good' to 'bad'. Each class was subject to a different economy of punishments, which ranged from imprisonment to 'solitary confinement in a dark dungeon'. To these classes 'was added, for a time, a "shameful" class, for which special regulations were drawn up "so that those who belonged to it would always be separated from the others and dressed in sackcloth"'.⁶⁰ It was possible, furthermore, for a recruit to move between the classes depending on the standard of his behaviour. As Foucault suggests, the goal of the hierarchical system was its own disappearance. It aimed 'neither at expiation, nor even precisely at oppression', but rather at normalization.⁶¹ Foucault contends:

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 209.

⁵⁹ Cf. R.W. Connell, *Gender and Power: Society, the Person and Sexual Politics* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1986).

⁶⁰ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (London: Penguin, 1977), p. 182.

⁶¹ Ibid.

The art of punishing in the regime of disciplinary power [...] brings five [...] operations into play: it refers individual actions to a whole that is at once a field of comparison, a space of differentiation and the principle of a rule to be followed. It differentiates individuals from one another, in terms of following overall rule: that the rule be made to function as a minimal threshold, as an average to be respected or as an optimum toward which one must move. It measures in quantitative terms and hierarchizes in terms of value the abilities, the level the 'nature' of individuals. It introduces, through this 'value-giving' measure, the constraint of a conformity that must be achieved. Lastly, it traces the limit that will define difference in relation to all other differences the external frontier of the abnormal (the 'shameful class' of the Ecole Militaire).⁶²

Foucault's observations can be appropriated to add a level of nuance to Whitehead's conceptualization of the masculine subject. By introducing the concept of the 'rule to be followed', Foucault allows for the establishment of a hierarchy of subjects in the 'particular localized settings' to which Whitehead refers. The establishment of this hierarchy, furthermore, does not entail recourse to the 'fixed male structure' that Whitehead perceives as the central failing in Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity.

The final stage of Whitehead's argument is problematic; but, nonetheless, elements of it can be appropriated and modified in order to contribute to the conceptual matrix that will underpin my reading of masculinities in *Es geht uns gut*. Drawing in the first instance on the work of Antony Giddens, Whitehead introduces the concept of a 'masculine ontology', a category that, he contends, might best designate 'the pursuit of being and becoming masculine by the masculine subject'.⁶³ Following Giddens, Whitehead describes 'the pursuit of ontological security, and the [...] minimization of existential anxiety that goes along with it' as 'a driving force for all subjects as they work at "going on" in social life'.⁶⁴ Drawing on Foucault's later work, which focussed on the 'means by which individuals turn themselves into subjects',⁶⁵ Whitehead argues that the pursuit of ontological security constitutes a process of identity work that 'recognizes the capacity of the subject to act upon himself in the technology of the self'.⁶⁶ But as Whitehead shows subsequently, the

⁶² Ibid., pp. 182-183.

⁶³ Whitehead, *Men*, p. 213.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 210.

⁶⁵ Michel Foucault, 'The Subject and Power', *Critical Inquiry*, 8, (1982), 777-95 (p. 778).

⁶⁶ Whitehead, *Men*, p. 211. Whitehead quotes here from Michel Foucault, 'Technologies of the Self', in *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, ed. by Luther H. Martin, Huck

agency that the subject draws from its ability to reflect on and determine the characteristics of the 'self' that it creates is qualified from the outset by the character of (gendered) identity as a discursive construct. For Whitehead, the pursuit of a coherent self, and therefore the maintenance of 'ontological security', necessarily entails the formation of a coherent gendered—here masculine—identity. However, the masculine subject can attain such coherence only 'through being positioned in and positioning itself within those discourses that speak of and suggest maleness/masculinity'.⁶⁷ In the concluding section of the chapter, Whitehead develops this point by connecting the concept of a masculine ontology to 'the desire to be in the world by the masculine subject', that is, the desire to operate in the public sphere. The concept of desire that Whitehead elaborates here is 'not primarily one of libido and sexuality but rather production (of self)'.⁶⁸ Whitehead contends that

[...] in this pursuit of being and becoming, desire becomes mediated by the idealized representations of gender that gravitate towards the discursive subject. In sum, for the masculine subject to become a man, it must appropriate the 'ideal' meanings of manhood circulating within that subject's particular cultural setting and communities.⁶⁹

A number of significant points arise from the foregoing observations, which build on the theoretical framework that informed my reading of *Wiener Passion*. Whitehead's contention that masculinities are constructions generated by the discourses that structure spaces and the ways in which these are brought to bear on the subject, is wholly consistent with the Foucauldian conceptualization of the subject that I drew on in Chapter Two. Yet his account of the subject differs from the one that structured my exploration of Rosa Hawelka's developmental trajectory insofar as it incorporates references to Foucault's later works. Whitehead's allusions to 'technologies of the self' that allow the subject to determine which of the available masculine discourses it takes up suggest a level of agency that is missing from Foucault's earlier accounts. But close reading of Whitehead's work in fact suggests that the opposite is true. In Whitehead's reading, the subject's pursuit of a stable

Gutman and Patrick H. Hutton (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), pp. 16-49 (p. 16).

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 212.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 213.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 210.

‘masculine ontology’ and the minimization of existential anxiety that this undertaking permits, is motivated by a desire for ever-closer approximation to the ideals of masculinity that operate in ‘particular localized settings’. Taken to their logical conclusion, Whitehead’s observations suggest that the only permissible method of minimizing existential anxiety is to strive for and welcome subjection. As a result, the ‘subjectivating’ power of discourse proves all the more pervasive. Yet it is precisely the implication that the individual is able to meditate on its formation as a subject that makes Whitehead’s schematization of the masculine subject particularly useful for a reading of *Es geht uns gut*. As we will see in what follows, Geiger’s male protagonists spend time contemplating their own situations and developmental trajectories in a manner that is absent from the narrative of Rosa Hawelka. This self-awareness is one element of the ‘turn inward’ that is visible in Geiger’s novel.

Before Whitehead’s observations can be applied to the novel, though, it is essential that we unpack his understanding of the two terms that he appropriates from Giddens. Whitehead’s attempt to provide what amounts to a post-structuralist reading of ‘ontological security’ produces a definition of the concept that diverges too far from the terms of its original—and accepted—formulation. Giddens understands ‘ontological security’ as referring to the subject’s ability to maintain a coherent sense of self-identity, a concept which, however, expressly does not denote ‘a distinctive trait or collection of traits possessed by the individual’.⁷⁰ Instead, Giddens understands self-identity as ‘continuity across time and space [...] interpreted reflexively by the agent’.⁷¹ Identity thus emerges here as a generalized construct that circumscribes notions of personhood and existence, an interpretation of the term that is incompatible with a post-structuralist understanding of subjectivity. While the masculine subject may derive a degree of security from his pursuit of masculinity, such security cannot legitimately be termed ontological: the ability of the masculine subject to exist as a person, to ‘continue over time’ is not contingent on his ability to conform to a set of discursive constructions that

⁷⁰ Antony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity; Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge: Polity, 1991).

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

surround masculinity, as Whitehead seems to suggest. A similar problem occurs with regard to Whitehead's use of the term 'existential anxiety', which Giddens understands as producing a subject who is 'obsessively preoccupied with apprehension of possible risks to his or her existence'.⁷² Existential anxiety thus refers for Giddens to a sense of insecurity surrounding the continuation of personhood *per se*. Yet it is the term 'existential' that might offer a way out of the terminological quandary with which Whitehead's observations present us. In what follows, I use the term in conjunction with both 'security' and 'anxiety' to circumscribe not the continuation of existence itself, but rather the continuation—and continuing coherence—of the identity through which that existence is lived out. As I will demonstrate, existential security and anxiety mark, define and problematize masculine subjectivity in Geiger's novel, particularly in the context of the protagonists' interaction with the national and familial spheres.

THE BOURGEOIS MASCULINE SUBJECT

The interaction of nation and family and its effect on the masculine subject's ability to construct a coherent masculine identity are made explicit in those sections of *Es geht uns gut* that portray the family life of Richard and Alma Sterk. These passages offer a comprehensive insight into a family unit whose structure appears to conform to the bourgeois patriarchal ideal of gender relations. The earliest critique of this paradigm is to be found in Friedrich Engels's 'Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staates', published in 1884. Engels contends that the modern family is 'gegründet auf die offene oder verhüllte Haussklaverei der Frau'. By assuming the role of 'Erwerber, Ernährer der Familie', the husband, by contrast, is elevated to 'eine Herrschaftsstellung, die keiner juristischen Extrabevorrechtung bedarf'.⁷³ Numerous elements of Engels's critique have been rehearsed in critical discourse on gender relations; yet one aspect of his commentary that has received comparatively little attention from critics is the suggestion that the bourgeois paradigm obliges the

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Friedrich Engels, 'Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staats', in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, 42 vols (Berlin: Dietz, 1975) XXI, pp. 36-84 (p. 75).

husband to adopt the role of breadwinner. Although this function undeniably forms the basis of patriarchal authority and privilege, Engels's parenthetical reference to its obligatory character is significant. First, it points up the constructed character of bourgeois masculinity, thereby implying the possibility of a slippage between the expectations associated with the masculine role and the individual's ability to fulfil them. More importantly, though, it suggests that the masculine subject is impelled to occupy simultaneously two complementary but distinct subject positions. On the one hand, the husband's 'Herrschaftsstellung' requires that he perform the role of 'Haushaltsvorstand' in the domestic sphere, while his status as 'Ernährer' forces him to function efficiently in the public arena in order to provide for his family. In his portrayal of Richard Sterk, Geiger explores how the obligation to fulfil this dualistic function affects the security of the masculine subject. Rather than increasing Richard's existential security, as Whitehead suggests, Richard's desire to emulate the bourgeois ideal of patriarchal masculinity—the "ideal" meaning [...] of manhood circulating within [his] particular cultural setting'—in fact works to undermine it. Central to the destabilizing effect of Richard's attempt to fulfil the terms of an 'ideal' masculinity is the relationship that the novel sets up between masculinity and nation, and the bourgeois subject's obligation to function effectively in both domains.

Richard's developmental trajectory is related over three chapters. The first two narrate events that occur around the time of the *Anschluss* and the signing of the *Staatsvertrag* in 1938 and 1955 respectively. The third chapter is set on 29 September, 1962, shortly before the *Nationalratswahlen* of that year. The interdependence of nation and family is established in the first of these chapters, which narrates the events of 6 August 1938. The chapter's *histoire*, however, begins earlier, on 13 March 1938, 'der Tag nach dem Beginn des Einmarsches' (*Gut*, p. 65), when Richard is hauled out of bed by the police. After spending the day in custody, he is interrogated by German officials who force him to sign a declaration to the effect that he will no longer involve himself in politics. Subsequently, at most two weeks later, Richard begins an affair with Frieda, his children's nanny. On 6 August, the leaders of the *Niederösterreichischer Bauernbund* summon Richard to the *Dunkelsteiner Wald*,

where they extract from him 'einen namenhaften Betrag' to support the families of Christian Socialists held as political prisoners in Dachau (*Gut*, p. 61). Lost on his return journey, Richard muses about his relationship with Frieda. After having sex with her on his arrival home, he spends the next day in the garden with his family and attempts to find a dignified way to end his affair.

In order to understand fully the implications for the masculine subject of the mutually implicative relationship between nation and family, we need to begin by scrutinizing Richard's response to his arrest. Richard's time in custody, which is presented from the protagonist's perspective, is spent in a cell with other political prisoners. On closer examination, the narration of Richard's experience evinces numerous parallels with Foucault's observations on the plural functions of punishment in the *Ecole Militaire*. Richard's cellmates are united by a set of characteristics that combine to form the 'normative' model of masculinity that operates in the 'katastrophal überfüllten Zelle' in which Richard finds himself. Richard's cellmates occupy subject positions that correspond to the militaristic and political constructions of masculinity conventionally associated with nationalism. Each belongs to one of Austria's political parties, a circumstance that gives rise to constant dispute 'um die Sache mit dem Gewissen, auf dem irgendwer das liebe Vaterland ja haben müsse' (*Gut*, p. 65). Richard also implies that his cellmates were involved in the *Februaraufstände* of 1934, suggesting thereby that they are prepared to fight not only for their beliefs, but for the good of the nation itself.

Comparison of this 'normative' construct, which, for Foucault, would constitute the 'rule to be followed', with Richard's own reaction to incarceration, establishes his mode of masculinity as subordinate to the norm. First, he perceives his arrest as a 'Gefährdung', and anticipates his first night in custody 'mit zunehmenden Schrecken' (*Gut*, p. 65). Richard's response thus indicates a sense of personal vulnerability that jars with the patriotic bravado that his cellmates display. His lack of 'Bürgerkriegserfahrung', meanwhile, means that he is 'mit derlei Situationen völlig unvertraut' (*Gut*, p. 65). In accordance with Foucault's observations, the hierarchy that Richard perceives among the prisoners is replicated in the economy of punishments to which they are subjected. The majority of Richard's cellmates have sustained minor injuries

as a result of physical violence, so that ‘Augenpartien erblühten als Veilchen, in Taxitüren eingeklemmte Finger färbten sich schwarz’ (*Gut*, p. 65). Richard, meanwhile, belongs to the small minority of prisoners who have been deprived of their belt and shoelaces, a manoeuvre that marks them out as those most likely to commit suicide. Richard’s reaction to this circumstance points up once more the effectiveness of disciplinary mechanisms in the fabrication of subjectivity. The decision to deprive him of his belt and shoelaces is characterized as the element of his experience in custody that causes him the most disquiet (*Gut*, p. 65).

More interesting than his deviation from the norms of masculinity, however, is Richard’s attitude toward overt political action and political violence. His conscious rejection of both has contradictory implications for a reading of the conception of the masculine subject that operates in *Es geht uns gut*. On the one hand, Richard implies that his lack of involvement in the *Februaraufstände* places him in a subordinate position in relation to his cellmates, a perception that is only reinforced by the degree of his deviation from the normative construction of masculinity that operates in the cell:

Wo nicht gestritten wurde, war die Stimmung gedrückt und Richard einer der gedrücktesten, weil er keine Bürgerkriegserfahrung hatte und im Gegensatz zu den meisten der Anwesenden mit derlei Situationen völlig unvertraut war. (*Gut*, p. 65)

When read against the contents of the declaration that Richard is forced to sign, however, his admission that he has never been seriously involved in politics, which is made explicit in his disdainful response to the officials’ request, takes on more significant connotations. Read against Whitehead’s observations, the declaration constitutes an attempt by the—now German—state to reduce the number of masculine discourses that are placed at the subject’s disposal. However, the state’s attempt to render illicit certain masculinities is frustrated on this occasion by the agency of the masculine subject. By deciding independently against overt political action, Richard neutralizes the subjectivating power of the techniques of disciplinarity enacted by the state apparatus. In stark contrast to Rosa Hawelka, therefore, Richard displays a combination of self-awareness and agency that is more consistent with Foucault’s later emphasis on ‘technologies of the self’.

Ultimately, however, it is this agency that leads to the disintegration of Richard's existential security. For now, it suffices to note that Richard's retrospective reconstruction of events suggests that the implications of his arrest are more far-reaching than his initial sense of mere disquiet might suggest:

Er weiß noch, daß er sich von den Beamten in aller Form verabschiedete und die Tür hinter sich schloß, als läge drinnen jemand im Sterben. [...] [E]in Gefühl von nie zuvor empfundene Wucht ist ihm in Erinnerung geblieben: daß jede Stufe, wenn sie mit seinem Gewicht belastet wird, einen Mechanismus auslösen könnte, der seine sofortige und neuerliche Festsetzung sowie Schläge ins Gesicht zum Ergebnis haben könnte. Er fühlt sich beobachtet und verfolgt, und trotz der peinlichen Mängel an seiner Garderobe traute er sich nicht, ein Taxi zu nehmen, wofür er keine wirkliche Erklärung hatte: vielleicht, weil die Fahrer allesamt wie Großdeutsche aussahen. Er zog es vor, die um vieles zeitaufwendigere Stadtbahn zu nehmen, setzte sich in den hintersten Wagen, und selbst dort erschien ihm, vom Schienenschlag und einer unbestimmten Angst geschüttelt, sein plötzliches Freikommen noch äußerst gespenstisch—wiewohl weitere Behelligungen seither nicht stattgefunden haben. (*Gut*, p. 66)

The foregoing quotation makes clear the extent of the existential anxiety that Richard's arrest has provoked. In combination, his fear that he may be subjected to physical violence, his reference to an 'unbestimmbare Angst', and the suggestion that he closes the door 'als läge drinnen jemand im Sterben', imply a form of existential insecurity that approximates Giddens's definition. The moment subsequent to his arrest is arguably the point in the novel at which Richard's reactions correspond most closely to those of Giddens's insecure subject who 'is obsessively preoccupied with apprehension of possible risks to his or her existence'.⁷⁴

The consequences of Richard's arrest become clear in the next stage of the chapter's *histoire*, which is recounted in the first episode of its *recit*. This begins with his drive home from the *Dunkelsteiner Wald*. The journey is extended unnecessarily when Richard loses his way due to the lack of road signs, a device that immediately suggests existential insecurity. Richard initially seeks the reason for this anxiety in the 'politische Umwälzungen' caused by the *Anschluss*. Yet as the chapter progresses, it becomes clear that his appeal for 'bessere Orientierung' is equally applicable to his personal situation. The potential ramifications of his covert support for the Christian Socialists are not

⁷⁴ Giddens, *Modernity* p. 53.

Richard's immediate concern; foremost in his mind is his relationship with Frieda:

Was geschieht? Was in den letzten Monaten viel zu oft geschehen ist: Daß sich der Vizedirektor der städtischen Elektrizitätswerke mit einer Hutblume unmöglich macht, Dr. Richard Sterk, Ende dreißig, doch kraft seines Amtes und seiner Würde ein gereifter Mann, der um sein Versagen weiß und trotzdem nicht in der Lage ist, dem Ganzen ein Ende zu machen. (*Gut*, p. 62)

This passage constitutes Richard as the object of plural, mutually-supportive discourses that surround social standing, age, maturity and occupation. It also makes clear that Richard's sense of existential security is derived in no small part from his position as the *Vizedirektor der städtischen Elektrizitätswerke*. Yet the form of masculinity that is produced by the interplay of these discourses stands in direct opposition to the alternative locus of existential security that Richard identifies in his relationship with Frieda:

Ich darf kein Doppelleben führen. Aber am Ende weiß er nicht, ob ihn der Gedanke erschreckt oder— noch schlimmer—ob es ihm schmeichelt, daß ihm dieses Doppelleben seit fünfeinhalb Monate, seit Ende Februar, besser von der Hand geht, als er sich zugetraut hätte. (*Gut*, p. 64)

Several elements of this rare moment of self-admonition are significant. First, Richard's attempt to estimate the duration of his affair—which has lasted five and a half months—locates its starting point in close temporal proximity to his arrest, thereby implying a causal link between the two events. This link is reinforced, to an extent, by the subsequent description of the act of sex between Richard and Frieda. The narrator's representation of this assignation suggests that Richard's desire for his children's nanny is connected to the particular mode of masculinity that his affair allows him to play out, one which does not entail the limits on sexual desire that are necessarily encoded into the ideal bourgeois paradigm. Comparisons between Frieda and Alma suggest that Richard's ability to realise his desires in the confines of his marriage is restricted by a sense of decency. His apparent ineptitude in his physical relationship with his wife exacerbates this restriction:

Ob es [Alma] auch von hinten gefallen würde? [...] Egal, er wird sie ohnehin nicht fragen, denn sein Respekt vor ihr vereitelt jeden Anlauf. Er weiß nicht warum, und ob es richtig ist, er weiß auch bei den Kindern nicht, was richtig ist, wie weit er gehen darf, damit sie beim Spielen nicht die Achtung vor ihm verlieren. Etwas Ähnliches gilt bestimmt für sein Verhältnis zu Alma im Bett. (*Gut*, p. 71)

Richard construes his desire for a more adventurous sex-life as incompatible with the patriarchal masculinity of the bourgeois husband. He cites as the reason for his reticence the fear that Alma might lose respect for him, thereby implying that such a demand would result in a loss of patriarchal authority. Sexual intercourse with Frieda by contrast, is represented without any connotations of limitation or insecurity. Richard's focalization of Frieda constantly fragments her into a collection of body parts, breasts, inner thighs, vagina and anus (*Gut*, pp. 62, 76). Their encounter on Richard's return home from the *Dunkelsteiner Wald* is narrated in detail. Emphasis is placed on the pleasure that Richard derives from his dominance over his partner, while Frieda emerges as a passive participant who is willing to acquiesce unconditionally to her employer's desires:

[Er sehnt] den Augenblick herbei, an dem er erneut mit Küssen über diese kinderspeckige Weinviertler Molligkeit herfällt. Er will es und will es gleichzeitig nicht [...]. Diesmal dreht er sie herum, sie beugt sich breitwillig nach vorn und die Sommernacht und das Zipern der Heuschrecken und die Dünste der Küche und das Knallen einer Fliege am gekippten Fenster—und—und die wie von einer obszönen Feuchtigkeit glänzenden Ausläufer von Friedas durchgebogenem, durchgedrücktem Rücken im Lichte der Deckenlampe und das Erlöschen der Glanzpartikel als Richard sich nochmals nach vorne beugt, um Friedas dicke Brüste zu berühren. (*Gut*, pp. 62-63)

From the chapter's outset, however, it becomes evident that Richard's ability to inhabit an alternative—and illicit—form of masculinity has itself become a source of existential insecurity, a circumstance which, significantly, manifests itself at once in a fear of disorder, and a perceived loss of control over his domestic space:

Er will nicht den Rest seines Lebens in solcher Unordnung verbringen. Das fällt ihm nicht im Traum ein. Oft empfindet er eine solche Abscheu gegen sich, und weil er Abscheu gegen sich empfindet, auch eine Abscheu gegen Frieda, daß ihn Überwindung kostet, sich im eigenen Haus von einem Zimmer ins nächste zu bewegen. (*Gut*, p. 64)

That the mode of insecurity that Richard's affair produces stems from its negative impact on his ability to function effectively as the paragon of bourgeois masculinity is underlined when Richard subsequently recounts a recent conversation with his wife:

Im Moment, wie Alma es nennt, ist er in der Tat nichts anderes als der Ernährer und Haushaltsvorstand. Und außerdem der Liebhaber des Kindermädchens. [...] Neulich kreidet sie ihm an, neben der Arbeit zuwenig Gestaltungskraft für

die Familie aufzubringen, ständig sei er abgekämpft und müde, ohne Ringe unter den Augen würde sie ihn gar nicht mehr erkennen. (*Gut*, p. 65)

During the remainder of the chapter, Richard takes steps to restore the order that he perceives as lacking in his life, and with it the sense of existential security of which his affair has deprived him. Given the connection that Geiger sets up between Richard's regret at his affair and his lack of control over space, it is unsurprising that the first object of his attempt at rationalization is the villa itself. The 'Unordnung' that characterizes Richard's circumstances is mirrored clearly in the condition of both the villa and its grounds. On stepping into the garden, Richard is irked by the damage to his property that has been caused by his son's pedal-car and his daughter's pram (*Gut*, p. 67). In conversation with Alma, he points out minor structural defects on the villa's exterior and requests that Alma engage a plumber '[der] sie in Ordnung bringen [soll]' (*Gut*, p. 69). Richard's desire to ensure that his relationship with his family is characterized by the same combination of dominance and order that underpins his relationship with space is expressed subsequently in a fantasy that he experiences after waking from a nap:

Ein Gefühl der Zufriedenheit erfaßt ihn und einen Augenblick lang hat er die sichere Empfindung, nicht nur Teil dieser Geräuschkulisse, sondern ihr Mittelpunkt, Brennpunkt eines familiären Kraftfeldes, der Unterbau, der dem Überbau zuhört. Dr. Richard Sterk: Jede familiäre Regung ein Attribut seiner großmächtigen Person. So hat er es sich vorgestellt, bevor er verheiratet war—und natürlich weiß er, daß hier der wahnhafte Teil seines Wunsches beginnt. (*Gut*, p. 73)

In combination, Richard's description of his surroundings and the quasi-megalomaniacal desire that he expresses simultaneously to embody, to support and to dominate his family, figure the garden explicitly as a space of avowedly patriarchal order. But the arrival of Richard's former *Studienkollege*, Crobath, who is now serving as a National Socialist functionary, allows the nation to penetrate the familial idyll. Geiger's characteristic irony comes into play at this juncture, as Crobath requests that Richard withdraw a demand for compensation from the *Wach- und Schließgesellschaft*. The demand had been made after the guard responsible for Alma's underwear shop had deserted his post to celebrate the arrival of German troops in Austria. The guard's neglect meant that the underwear on display was damaged through exposure to the sun. Crobath's request thus reveals an additional source of disorder in Richard's

private life. Alma's occupation as manager of her parents' business contravenes the conventional bourgeois division of labour, and provides Alma with access to the public sphere. Crobath's comments cast Richard's demand for compensation as a political concern, suggesting that 'Richards Verhalten ein ungünstiges Licht auf seine politische Einstellung werfe' (*Gut*, p. 81). Crobath subsequently threatens and bribes Richard, who is offered the opportunity to profit from the Arianization of Jewish property by acquiring larger premises for Alma's business. At the same time, Crobath warns him that he will regret treating the matter lightly. Richard decides to give into Crobath's demands, but proceeds in a way that restores the order that he perceives to be lacking in his family life, and that realizes his fantasy of functioning as an authoritarian patriarch. He resolves to remove his money from Alma's business, thereby ensuring its deletion from the *Handelsregister*, and compelling Alma to remain at home with the children. As a welcome consequence, Frieda becomes expendable, and can legitimately be dismissed. His final decision, crucially, is that his son, Otto, should be disciplined more rigorously. Richard's response to these resolutions suggests that they restore to him the sense of ontological security of which his arrest and his affair have deprived him. Having made the necessary changes to his family structure, Richard now displays a 'confidence [...] in the continuity of [his] identity' that provides a marked contrast with his reaction to his arrest:

Ihm ist klar, die Welt wird sich weiter wandeln, mehr, weniger. Und obwohl es alles in allem nicht glaubhaft scheint, daß die Umstände, die er für sich wünscht, ausgerechnet in diesem Moment und auf diese Weise ihren Anfang nehmen, wird er selbst so bleiben, wie er ist, und auf eine zufällige Übereinstimmung mit einer jetzt noch ungewissen Zukunft warten. (*Gut*, p. 90)

The first chapter of *Es geht uns gut* that occupies itself with Richard's developmental trajectory, therefore, sets up a complex relationship between the nation and the family: rather than merely presenting the latter as a microcosm of the former, Geiger points up the degree of interaction between the two spheres, and its effect on the masculine subject's ability to maintain a coherent sense of identity. Richard's decision to begin an affair with Frieda is implicitly staged as a compensatory strategy that restores to him the existential security of which his arrest—an event that was catalysed by the 'Umwälzungen' occurring at national level—deprived him. Subsequently, a representative of the nation penetrates the domestic sphere in order to offer Richard a way out of his

affair, which itself had become a locus of existential insecurity. Crobarth's intervention offers Richard a means simultaneously to reinstate and reinforce his proximity to the norm of bourgeois masculinity. The security that Richard derives from this turn of events corresponds to Whitehead's suggestion that the minimization of existential anxiety can be achieved only through acceptance of, and acquiescence to, the 'ideal meaning of manhood that circulates in the subject's particular setting'. Subsequent events, however, suggest that the degree of Richard's proximity to this ideal in fact reinforces his sense of existential insecurity, rather than assuaging it.

The second chapter involving Richard is set in the midst of the negotiations for the *Staatsvertrag*, on 12 May 1955. The chapter establishes a relationship between nation and family that is less complex than the one explored above. While the narrative strand that occupies itself with Richard's arrest and affair explores the mutual interaction of the national and the familial spheres, the chapter set during the 1950s juxtaposes explicitly Richard's perception of himself as an effective statesman and his inability to function effectively as 'Haushaltsvorstand'. This slippage is introduced by means of an argument that erupts between Richard and his daughter, concerning her relationship with Peter Erlach.

From the outset of the chapter, it is clear that Richard has implemented his earlier resolution to approximate more closely the normative dynamics of bourgeois masculinity. Ingrid describes her father as a domineering patriarch whose every utterance is to be understood as a 'Diktat' (*Gut*, p. 103). Yet Ingrid's decisive rebellion against her father's authority undercuts irrevocably Richard's ability to function effectively in the role of authoritarian patriarch. Rather than adhering to his demands, she simply ignores them: 'Auf solche Gespräche legt Ingrid keinen Wert mehr. Aus dem Alter ist sie heraus. Die ewig gleiche Sackgasse. Da hat sie Besseres zu tun' (*Gut*, p. 143). As the chapter progresses, Richard's inadequacy in this regard is explicitly juxtaposed with his role as statesman. After his initial attempt to discipline his daughter falls on deaf ears, Richard, suffering from toothache, confronts her again over breakfast:

Und jetzt, wo sich die Verhältnisse ein wenig klären und man endlich wieder Herr im eigenen Haus wird, lasse ich mir den Unfrieden nicht von der eigenen Tochter hereintragen. (*Gut*, p. 145)

Significant in Richard's outburst here is the imagery that he uses, which inverts the relationship between the national and the familial set up in the remainder of his utterance. His suggestion that Austria is becoming 'Herr im eignen Haus' but that his daughter is causing 'Unfrieden' at home expresses directly the interactive relationship between the two spheres. Yet Richard's use of the term 'Unfrieden' is suggestive once more of a certain insecurity, which emerges this time as a result of his inability to exercise control over his family and thus to function effectively as 'Haushaltsvorstand'. Beyond the slippage that Geiger sets up here between the modes of masculinity that operate in the national and familial spheres, one further point is significant. Ingrid's reaction to her father provides an initial hint as to the negative impact that Richard's attempt to harness the full authority of the bourgeois patriarch will have on his relationship with his daughter:

Sollte ihr Vater aber an der Beziehung zu seiner Tochter interessiert sein und ihr zuliebe auf seine Machtausübung verzichten, so wäre das eine echte Liebesbezeugung, die Ingrid von ihrem harten Kurs abbringen kann. (*Gut*, p. 146)

The full effects of Richard's failed attempt to function effectively in the national and the familial spheres, and of the degree to which his sense of existential security depends on his ability to negotiate effectively his relationship with those spheres, become clear in the third of the four chapters documenting his developmental trajectory. Set on the September 29 1962, the chapter narrates Richard's reaction to the news that he is to be forced into early retirement from his post as Minister. Richard's conversation with Alma on his arrival home makes clear that, during the intervening years, Richard has abandoned completely his role as 'Haushaltsvorstand' in favour of his ministerial duties. He notes: 'Er sollte [Alma] sagen, daß ihn die Situation an seinen Cousin Leo erinnert, der bis 1953 in Kriegsgefangenschaft war und sich seine Rechte als Hausherr zurückerobern mußte' (*Gut*, p. 194). Richard's subsequent observations suggest that his dedication to work increased in response to his gradual loss of authority in the family home. The particular aspect of his work that Richard draws upon to compensate for his loss of patriarchal authority is significant:

Er hat für die Arbeit gelebt, Wochen ohne Sommer und Feiertage, in denen er politisch für das Privatleben der Leute eintrat, während sich bei ihm zu Hause

die Niederlagen summierten mit dem Effekt, daß er sich weiter in Richtung Ministerium zurückzog. Dort hat er seit 1948 alles im Rahmen seiner Möglichkeiten gemeistert. Noch in diesem Jahr wird die letzte Gaslaterne in Wien erlöschen, nahezu wöchentlich weiht irgendwo ein Pfarrer ein Transformatorenhäuschen ein. Er, Dr. Richard Sterk, *Der Römer*, hat Turbinehallen bauen lassen groß wie Opernhäuser. (*Gut*, p. 201)

Richard's reflection on his working and family lives extends beyond the villa the link between his sense of existential security and his control over space. While the earlier chapter drew attention to Richard's desire to make good the defects visible in his own home, here his sphere of influence extends into public space. His reference to the epithet 'Römer', furthermore, equates his activities with the prototypically masculine project of Empire building, thereby underlining the key role that work, executed in the public sphere, plays in buttressing his masculinity. While the conceptualizations of urban space set forth in *Wiener Passion* and *Suche nach M.* have a formative effect on the urban subject, *Es geht uns gut* highlights the subject's ability to determine the dynamics of both public and private space, and therefore confers upon it a degree of agency absent in the earlier novels discussed here.

Yet Richard's consistent neglect of the familial sphere is, in fact, shown to increase the existential anxiety provoked by his removal from post. His initial response to Chancellor Gorbach's decision runs as follows:

Ja? Ja? Wie bitte? Soll er jetzt den einsamen Mann spielen? Soll er wie Alma ein Buch ums andere lesen, um klüger zu werden, aber ohne die Möglichkeit, die neue Klugheit noch anwenden zu können [...] [E]s stimmt, dass er Zeit braucht. Aber Zeit in einem völlig anderen Sinn, Zeit als Frist, Zeit zur Vorbereitung auf die sich ändernde Situation, die in erster Linie von einem bedrohlichen Überfluß geprägt sein wird. (*Gut*, p. 201)

Once more, Richard's reaction to Gorbach's announcement corresponds more closely to Giddens's definition of existential anxiety than to Whitehead's. Richard's suggestion that the changing situation will be characterized by a 'bedrohlicher Überfluß' suggests in the first instance his own sense of superfluity; but it can also be understood to corroborate Giddens's suggestion that 'anxiety about [...] being engulfed, crushed or overwhelmed by externally impinging events' constitutes one of the main sensations related to existential anxiety.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Ibid.

However, Richard's inability to perform effectively the dual role of the bourgeois patriarch is not the only source of anxiety that emerges during his retrospective contemplation of the years between 1938 and 1962. It is coupled with a realization that his attempt to emulate this mode of masculinity during his children's upbringing has, in fact, been responsible not only for his estrangement from his daughter, but also for the death of his son, Otto, whose enthusiasm for National Socialism motivated him to join first the Hitler Youth and then the *Volkssturm*:

Wenn Richard es in diesem Licht besieht, haben die Konflikte mit Ingrid schon damals begonnen. Daß das Mädchen die ganze Härte der seinerzeitigen Erziehungsmethoden zu spüren bekam, hatte bestimmt damit zu tun, daß sie die Tochter eines politisch unzuverlässigen Vaters war. Sie selbst wird es vermutlich so empfunden haben, nachdem Richard bei seinem Besuch keinerlei Abmilderungen der Strafmaßnahmen hatte einwirken können. *Damit das Mädel weiß, was sich gehört*. Auch Ottos Kriegsbegeisterung eine Kompensation der Irrtümer seines Vaters. Daß Richard das nicht früher in den Sinn gekommen ist, wo es so nahliegend ist. (*Gut*, pp. 205-206)

Subsequent events betray the extent to which Richard's existential security is undermined by his belated acknowledgment that his attempts to approximate the model of the bourgeois masculine subject have affected his family life. After a tense visit from Peter and Ingrid, Richard locks himself in his room, overcome with 'ein Gefühl tiefer Niedergeschlagenheit' (*Gut*, p. 224).

Geiger's representation of Richard Sterk, therefore, contradicts Whitehead's suggestion that the pursuit of ideal masculinities necessarily provides the subject with an increased sense of existential security. Richard's attempts to fulfil the dualistic function that is ascribed to the bourgeois masculine subject—and thereby to negotiate effectively the interaction between the familial and the national spheres—result not only in increased existential anxiety, but in the irrevocable breakdown of his relationship with his children.

MILITARY MASCULINITY AS MASQUERADE

An equally complex relationship between masculinity and nation is evident in Geiger's representation of military masculinity, which is contained in a single

chapter that focuses on the experience of Peter Erlach. The chapter narrates the events of April 8 1945, and deserves particularly close consideration because it is the only part of the novel that is set in the centre of Vienna. This chapter is focalized by Peter, whose connection to the Sterk family is reinforced here by the presence of Ingrid's brother, Otto, who is a member of the same regiment. The chapter narrates Peter's involvement in the defence of Vienna during the last days of the Second World War. He and Otto are members of the *Volkssturm*, which was constituted on September 25 1944 as a kind of last-ditch people's militia for the defence of the home front. Members of the *Volkssturm* were originally recruited from among men aged sixteen to sixty, but in early October its numbers were supplemented by members of the Hitler Youth aged fifteen and sixteen. References to the deployment of the Hitler Youth evoke associations with the mode of military masculinity that is associated with German fascism, which Klaus Theweleit analyses extensively in his seminal *Männerphantasien*. At first glance, the young age of the 'soldiers' involved renders such associations irrelevant for an interpretation of the events that Peter focalizes. As Theweleit shows, however, teenage boys were the primary objects of efforts to produce a form of military masculinity that was exclusive to German fascism.⁷⁶

Elements of Theweleit's analysis surface parenthetically in Peter's account, which includes perfunctory references to his training. Peter relates his humiliating 'Degradierung' in front of the cadets, his obligation to obey unconditionally those above him (particularly the *Fähnleinführer*), and the exhausting corporal punishment that he underwent after laughing at his superior. Corporal punishment and strict hierarchy were key elements of the regime that operated in the National Socialist *Kadettenanstalt*, which Theweleit investigates through the writings of Ernst von Salomon. According to Theweleit, the *Kadettenanstalt* was run according to conventions that mimicked those of Foucauldian disciplinarity, which I examined in Chapter Two. The key difference between the *Kadettenanstalt* and the institutions that Rosa encounters, however, is the former's exclusive focus on the soldier's body. The

⁷⁶ Klaus Theweleit, *Männerphantasien*, 2 vols, paperback edn (Munich: Piper, 2000), II: *Männerkörper – zur Psychoanalyse des weißen Terrors*.

purpose of the training provided by the *Kadettenstalt* to transform the teenage male body into a so-called *Körperpanzer*, a conversion that was achieved through the rigours of drill.⁷⁷ The goal of this physical transformation, however, was primarily psychological. Through constant subjection to corporal punishment and unbearable physical exertion, the male subject was trained to accept pain as the ‘Antwort auf seinen Lustbegehren’.⁷⁸ Key in this process was the conversion of emotional responses into physical perceptions. In short, the body became the surface on which all emotion was registered. Theweleit writes:

Das Bündel aus Muskeln, Haut und Blut und Knochen und Sehnen, das ist der Ort, wo die Gefühle sein dürfen, nicht irgendwo anders. Jede Drillaktion ist wie ein Hinweis darauf und jede ist danach strukturiert, ebenso wie die Strafaktionen. Nichts bleibt undeutliches Gefühl, Wunsch, alles wird verwandelt in deutliche Wahrnehmung: der Wunsch nach Körperwärme. In die Wahrnehmung der Hitze des Körperschmerzes, der Wunsch nach Berührung in die Wahrnehmung des Peitschenhiebes.⁷⁹

The teenage boys’ internment in the *Kadettenanstalt* performed another important function. The social dynamics of the institution meant that corporal punishment was meted out not only by the officers in charge, but also by the cadets themselves. As Theweleit shows, the fact that they were trained to equate physical pain with emotional response promoted a sense of belonging among the cadets. Thus, the soldier’s body was integrated more easily into the ‘Ganzheitsmaschine Truppe’, which replicated *en masse* the combination of ‘Geschlossenheit, Stärke, Exaktheit [...] Kampf und eine bestimmte Männlichkeit’ that the *Kadettenanstalt* sought to inculcate in its inmates.⁸⁰

Theweleit’s comments are relevant for an interpretation of the unconventional narrated topography that Geiger presents in this chapter because of the relationship that Theweleit sets up between the troop, the nation and the ‘Front’. Peter’s focalization of the city in this section corresponds to the principle of ‘present absence’ to which I alluded in the opening sections of this chapter. The reader is informed immediately that the flashback is set in the city, but detailed cognitive mapping of Peter’s exact location is impossible. Parenthetical references to the ‘Burggarten’ (*Gut*, p. 102) and ‘Stiftgasse’ (*Gut*, p.

⁷⁷ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 144-162.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *ibid.*, p. 155,

108) place Peter and his fellow soldiers somewhere in the city's first district. Subsequently, the action moves back to the suburbs when Peter seeks refuge with his family in Kahlenberg after sustaining an injury. The link between city and suburbs, however, remains opaque. The reader discovers that Peter is brought to Nußdorf from a 'Verbandsplatz' whose location is indeterminate (*Gut*, p. 121). Thus, the city is isolated from the suburbs, and Vienna itself remains 'strangely masked' throughout. Although references are made to particular streets, these are always external to the immediate setting. The portions of the city that Peter and his comrades traverse are thus reduced to anonymous collections of streets, devoid of any points of reference that would enable the reader to identify them.

The beginning of the chapter provides two hints as to Geiger's reasons for masking Vienna in this way, namely the date on which the narrated events take place, and the city's designation as 'Frontstadt'. The significance of this epithet increases in the light of Theweleit's observations. For Theweleit, the location of the 'Front' is determined by the presence of the 'Truppe', which, in turn, functions usually 'zur Erhaltung anderer mann männlichen Ganzheitsgebilde' such as the nation.⁸¹ The relationship between 'Truppe' and 'Nation' changes, however, when the 'Truppe' constitutes the 'Front'. In this circumstance, the 'Truppe' no longer merely sustains the nation, but embodies it. Theweleit describes the nation, in the first of its three 'Erscheinungsformen', as 'identisch mit dem harten Kern der Front'.⁸² Subsequently, however, Theweleit revises and extends this analogy and elevates the body of the soldier, integrated initially into the 'Truppe', into a more visible and privileged position. While the nation is identical to the hard core of the front, the bodies of the soldiers that constitute the core simultaneously represent 'der Ort des Krieges'.⁸³ Mapped back onto Peter's narrative and Vienna's designation as 'Frontstadt', Theweleit's analogy has a number of implications. Perhaps the most significant is the fact that Vienna, as both 'Frontstadt' and 'Ort des Krieges'

⁸¹ *ibid.*, p. 151.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 94.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

becomes simultaneously synonymous with both the body of the soldier and the Austrian nation as a whole.

While Peter's narrative reproduces aspects of the relationship between soldier, nation and city that Theweleit addresses, the usefulness of his work does not stem exclusively from the similarities between his description of the soldier's body and the bodies that Peter focalizes. Instead, as suggested above, the first part of the chapter provides an ironic critique of certain aspects of the fascist military masculinity that is at the centre of Theweleit's account. The most obvious source of irony is the replacement of the 'Gesamtheitsmaschine Truppe' of Theweleit's account by Peter's *Volkssturm* 'troop' of six teenage boys. Further incongruity is introduced through the persistent use of field-specific vocabulary related to the military, and elements of National Socialist discourse, which jar with equally ubiquitous allusions to the 'soldiers' age and lack of experience. The appearance of the boys' 'ersten Bolschewisten', pushing a pram filled with ammunition and rations, contributes further to the irony of the situation. This tips over into almost slapstick humour when a civilian spots the armed youths in a doorway:

Der Mann, ein älterer Herr, ist in Unterhosen, seine schwarzen, verwaschenen Drillichhosen hat der dabei, nur sind sie unten verknotet, und offenbar mit Mehl gefüllt [...] Geht bloß nach Hause, knurrt der Mann kopfschüttelnd, als er die bewaffneten Hitlerjungen in dem offenen Haustor sieht. In gebeugter Haltung verharret er einen Moment, als bemühe er sich zu begreifen, was das alles zu bedeuten hat, und wie es kommen konnte, daß er in löcherigen Unterhosen und mit verrutschten Kniestrümpfen auf der Straße steht. 'Ein Wahnsinn' sagt er. (*Gut*, p. 106)

The appearance of this unlikely interloper is a narrative device that directs the reader's interpretation of the state of affairs portrayed here. The desired reader response is embedded in the narrative in the passing civilian's confusion and concise, but conclusive summing up of the situation he is facing. The ironic devices introduced in the preceding paragraphs, however, encourage the reader to project the civilian's assessment of his own bizarre circumstances onto the young soldiers' equally peculiar predicament. By introducing these elements of irony, therefore, Geiger critiques the received notions of fascist military masculinity. Through the fleeting references to military training and institutions such as the *Kadettenanstalt*, Geiger juxtaposes the artificially-constructed body

of the stereotypical fascist soldier with the brutal reality of children's involvement in the National Socialist military.

These elements of irony are only one aspect of the more nuanced engagement with military masculinity that takes place in this section of the novel. In order to understand the full implications of Geiger's critique, we need to consider briefly the concept of masquerade, and its relationship with the (clothed) body and questions of gender. The intrinsically dissembling nature of clothing is explored by John Harvey in 'Why Can't We Trust Our Clothes'. Harvey notes with incredulity that philosophers' attitudes to clothing have been almost universally negative:

What is surprising is that clothes in general, clothes of all sorts, have provoked mistrust in the wisest of men. [...] We wear them but they are not us: the important "us" is hidden by them. Wittgenstein said that language disguises thought as clothes disguise the body. Less severely, Kierkegaard said that as one takes off one's clothes in order to swim, so one must strip oneself mentally naked in order to know the truth.⁸⁴

Gender theorists have conventionally interpreted masquerade as an exclusively female activity. Following Joan Riviere, the term usually refers to a tendency among women who display traits conventionally coded as masculine to draw attention to their feminine qualities in interactions with men. Through recourse to Freudian psychoanalysis, Riviere interprets masquerade as a coping mechanism by means of which women can circumvent reprisals from men for the castration and possession of the penis that their assumption of male characteristics necessarily involves.⁸⁵ A number of theorists have appropriated elements of Riviere's examination to formulate a more universal definition of masquerade. Drawing on Paul Hoch, for example, Henry Brod suggests that masculinity constitutes a 'mask' behind which is hidden a repressed, feminine anal eroticism.⁸⁶ According to Broad (and Hoch), therefore, the mask of masculinity is worn in order to perpetuate a heterosexual, phallic sexuality. Brod concludes his account with a brief meditation on the difference between sex role theory and performativity. He suggests that the main difference

⁸⁴ John Harvey, *Clothes* (Durham: Acumen, 2008), p. 6.

⁸⁵ Cf. Joan Riviere, 'Womanliness as a Masquerade' [1929], in *Influential Papers from the 1920s*, ed. by R.D. Hinzewood (London: Karnac, 2004), pp. 127-38.

⁸⁶ Cf. Henry Brod, 'Masculinity as Masquerade', in *The Masculine Masquerade: Masculinity and Representation*, ed. by Andrew Perchuk and Helaine Posner (Boston, MA: MIT Press, 2004), pp. 13-17.

between the two theories lies in the relationship between the subject and the role. While sex-role theory assumes the existence of a subject behind the role being performed, performative gender theory assumes that subject and performance are one and the same. For Brod, the male masquerade constitutes a step back in the direction of role theory, while at the same time retaining elements of performativity.⁸⁷

Leaving aside for a moment the emphasis placed on gender in each of these analyses, the critics' generic comments on masquerade and its connection to the clothed body are in themselves significant when mapped onto the events that Peter focalizes. A great deal of emphasis is placed on the outward appearance of both the *Volksstürmer* and the Russian soldiers. While assembled in the doorway waiting for the Russians to reappear, for example, the boys converse about possible methods of improving their uniforms, including tricks for ironing trouser legs to make them similar to those worn by navy cadets (*Gut*, p. 105). Peter also claims that the company are jealous of the fourteen-year-old volunteer, with his 'mackellos adjustierter Kleidung' and his belt, made of leather rather than papier-mâché (*Gut*, p. 105). The Russians, on the other hand, are described merely as 'Gestalten', followed by a paragraph-long description of their uniforms. This emphasis upon exteriority, moreover, is complemented initially by the complete absence of references to the individual bodies of any of the soldiers in question, as the Russians' vague designation as 'Gestalten' suggests.

This emphasis on costume at the expense of corporeality is significant for a number of reasons. Firstly, it relativizes further the conventional portrayal of fascist military masculinity, which focuses almost exclusively on the body. It is worth noting in this connection that the narration of Peter's 'Degradierung' emphasizes an alteration in his clothing through the removal of his insignia. Perhaps more significantly, however, it also points up the performative nature of military masculinity. In a manner reminiscent of the use of uniform in *Wiener Passion*, the uniform that the boys wear renders their corporeal specificity irrelevant. Two elements of the scenario recounted, however, suggest that Geiger conceptualizes military masculinity as masquerade rather than

⁸⁷ Ibid.

performance. Firstly, the use of a 'Ratsche' to simulate gunfire constitutes an attempt to fool the ear, just as conventional instances of masquerade attempt to fool the eye. Secondly, the comic intervention of the aged passer-by occurs just as the *Fähnleinführer* begins to praise his 'troop' for their exemplary soldiery. As well as bringing the *Fähnleinführer's* adulations to an end, the old man's hail, 'Geht bloß nach Hause' functions as an interpellation that forces the boys to acknowledge the incongruity of the specific 'role' that they are playing.

The gendered account of masquerade detailed above is of particular relevance for an account of Peter Erlach's masculinity, which extends the relevance of masquerade beyond specifically military masculinity. During the remainder of the chapter, the reader is presented with an insight into Peter's family life, and hence his developmental trajectory. Of central importance in this regard is Peter's relationship with his mother, who, the reader discovers, is dying of cancer. Peter daydreams about his mother on a number of occasions within the chapter. Significantly, these thoughts are generally triggered at moments when his masculinity is most under threat. Peter's ruminations reveal that, before he was enlisted, his masculinity was predicated on a single task, namely carrying his mother into the cellar to protect her from allied bombings. This display of masculinity, however, was eventually prohibited, as Peter's mother refused to be moved during the attacks: 'Als die einzige Männersache, nämlich die Mutter in den Keller zu tragen, gestrichen war, stand Peter überall im Weg, vor allem seit die Schule geschlossen hatte' (*Gut*, p. 128).

Peter's dependence on his relationship with his mother as the exclusive locus of masculinity is lent particular significance when considered in the light of Judith Butler's account of masquerade. Drawing on Lacan, she suggests that the male subject is in fact incapable of signifying autonomously. The apparently self-grounded identity of the masculine subject is structured around the various subject positions abjected by it during its formation. She continues

For Lacan, the subject comes into being—that is begins to posture as a self-grounding signifier, within language—only on the condition of a primary repression of the pre-individuated incestuous pleasures associated with the now repressed maternal body.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York; London: Routledge, 1990), p. 100.

For Butler, masculine identity is always already a masquerade, which 'seeks to conceal the repression which is both its ground and the perpetual possibility of its own ungrounding' (*Trouble*, pp. 44-45). As a result, women are called upon to reflect the authority of the male subject, and affirm its 'illusory autonomy'. Despite the fact that the recognition and admission of such dependency necessarily undercuts masculine autonomy and authority, moreover, the masculine subject actively seeks such affirmation as the confirmation of a route to 'the recovery of pre-individuated *jouissance*' (*Trouble*, p. 45). Inherent in the constitution of the masculine subject, therefore, is a conflict between 'the demand for a full recognition of autonomy that will also and nevertheless promise a return to those full pleasures prior to repression and individuation' (*Trouble*, p. 63). Read in this light, Peter's dependence upon his mother for the performance of masculinity, and his immediate recourse to thoughts of her when his masculinity is placed under threat can be read as an extension of Geiger's ironic critique of military masculinity as an instance of masquerade. Peter's military masculinity thus offers no more existential security than Richard's attempts to perform the dual role of the bourgeois patriarch. In both instances, models of masculinity that are constructed in the familial sphere undermine the validity of those configurations that originate at national level. As we will see in the next section, the mutually-implicative relationship between the familial and the national is transformed in the sections of the novel that relate to Philipp Erlach, and which are set in contemporary Vienna. In these sections, masculinity, nation and the family are each shown to be in crisis, a circumstance that perforce sets up a relationship of equivalence between them.

MASCULINITY IN CRISIS: PHILIPP ERLACH

As we saw at the outset of this chapter, critical responses to *Es geht uns gut* are few and far between. The few article-length studies that do exist, though, focus primarily on the sections of the novel that relate to Philipp Erlach. But they also share a second characteristic, which, significantly, places them in direct opposition to the press responses discussed at the beginning of this chapter. As we have seen, Klauhs, Schmitz and Jandl's reviews are concerned primarily with

the way in which the Sterks' family history interrelates with the key events of Austria's past. Scholarly analyses, on the other hand, seek either to locate the novel in the generic tradition of the *Familienroman*—one even going as far as to draw a comparison with Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks*—or to interrogate it for its potential contribution to the literature of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*.⁸⁹ Reading the sections of the novel that are set in Vienna primarily as an exploration of 'ein Verweigern des Erbes der dritten Generation',⁹⁰ scholarly responses highlight the dialectical relationship that these sections set up between the 'aufgezwungene Erinnerungsarbeit' necessitated by inheritance on the one hand,⁹¹ and, on the other, the trans-generational rupture produced by 'die familiäre Atmosphäre des Schweigens, der Mangel an Kommunikation'.⁹² As Ulrike Vedder notes in her 'auf Fragen des Genealogischen und der Toten konzentrierte Lektüre',⁹³ this contradictory combination produces in Philipp a profoundly ambivalent response to his family's past. She maintains that

[der Enkel] seine Familiengeschichte schreibt *und* gleichzeitig verweigert, das Erbe antritt *und* verwirft, die Geschichte erinnert *und* vergisst, kurz: eine Figur darstell[t], die in die distanzierte 'Dokumentation einer untergangenen Kultur' zugleich existentiell involviert ist.⁹⁴

The quotation that Vedder uses here points up a key omission that her reading shares with the work of such critics as Julia Freytag and Hans-Joachim Hahn. Their exclusive focus on the ways in which Philipp attempts to cope with the 'Erinnerungslast' that his grandparents' villa represents leads them to overlook the broader socio-cultural context against which these attempts take place.⁹⁵ A reading of the novel unencumbered by the reductive perspective that is the inevitable consequence of generic categorization reveals that Philipp's

⁸⁹ Hans-Joachim Hahn: 'Beobachtungen zur Ästhetik des Familienromans heute', in *Familie und Identität in der deutschen Literatur*, ed. by Thomas Martinec and Claudia Nitschke (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang 2009), pp. 275-292.

⁹⁰ Ulrike Vedder, 'Erblasten und Totengespräche: zum Nachleben der Toten in Texten von Marlene Streeruwitz, Arno Geiger und Sibylle Lewitscharoff', in *Literatur im Krebsgang Totenbeschwörung und memoria in der deutschsprachigen Literatur nach 1989*, ed. by Arne De Winde and Anke Gilleir (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008), pp. 227-241 (p. 234).

⁹¹ Cf. Julia Freytag, "'Wer kennt Österreich?': Familiengeschichten erzählen; Arno Geiger *Es geht uns gut* (2005) und Eva Menasse *Vienna* (2005)', in *Nachbilder des Holocaust*, ed. by Inge Stephan and Alexandra Tacke (Vienna; Cologne: Böhlau, 2007), pp. 111-124

⁹² Ibid, p. 112.

⁹³ Vedder, 'Erblasten', p. 236.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Freytag, "'Wer kennt Österreich?", p. 112.

predicament actually transcends the boundaries of the familial sphere. The sections of the novel that are set in contemporary Vienna in fact document a set of broader cultural transitions whose implications play out, once more, in Geiger's representation of masculinity's relationship with both the national and the familial.

I show in what follows that Geiger's representation of Philipp Erlach articulates clearly with the paradigm of masculinity that has emerged as a result of the contemporary 'crisis' of masculinity. This crisis, I argue, is repeated in Geiger's representation of both the family and of the nation, domains which, as I have shown, coalesce in his representation of the Sterks' villa. An ostensibly valid method of dealing with this three-fold crisis is provided by the arrival at the villa of the two *Schwarzarbeiter*. This sets in train a series of events that culminate in Philipp's decision to leave Austria for the Ukraine, thereby providing him with access to a field of gender relations in which both masculine identity and national identity—as well as the connection between them—are figured as more stable. A reading of the novel that focuses on its representation of masculinity, however, perforce precludes a positive interpretation of this development, which, as I show, in fact amplifies the resonance of the criticism implied in Geiger's representation of the 'nation in crisis' beyond the borders of Austria's national community.

The discourse of crisis has gained considerable currency in masculinity studies since the 1980s, to the extent that, as Whitehead contends, it 'pervades many of the social, political and academic debates about men'.⁹⁶ Tim Edwards cites as the main symptoms of the perceived crisis a gradual shift in the power dynamics that underlie key social institutions—the family and work, for example—and the ways in which men perceive themselves and their own masculinity. This differentiation leads Edwards to distinguish between the 'crisis from within' and the 'crisis from without'. He maintains:

Evidence for the masculinity in crisis thesis tends to come from two inter-linked sets of concerns. The first I call the crisis from without. This includes some partially empirically documented concerns relating to the position of men within such institutions as the family, education and work. A specific concern here is the perception that men have lost, or are losing, power or privilege relative to their prior status in these institutions. The second I call the crisis

⁹⁶ Whitehead, *Men*, p. 47.

from within. This is far less easily documented as it centres precisely on a perceived shift in men's experiences of their position as men, their maleness, and what it means. Most importantly, this often refers to a sense of powerlessness, meaninglessness or uncertainty.⁹⁷

Edwards goes on to trace the roots of the perceived crisis back to structural changes that have taken place in a variety of domains, of which three are relevant to our purposes. The first is the realm of work, which, as Edwards notes, has 'often stood as the most fundamental foundation of masculine identity', so that successful masculinity was equated directly with success at work whether in middle-class terms of a career or in more working-class terms of physical labour.⁹⁸ Edwards notes that changes in the relations of production, manifest in the 'decline of manufacturing' and 'increasingly market-driven policies' have 'led to rising occupational insecurity'.⁹⁹ More importantly though, Edwards notes that the 'crisis' in men's relationship with work has been exacerbated by 'the increasing participation of women in the work force combined with a greater emphasis on sexual equality'.¹⁰⁰ The consequences of this development, Edwards contends, are felt beyond the boundaries of the workplace: first, 'they rupture any straight-forward equation of work with masculinity', and second 'they start to break down [...] the equation of provision with masculinity'.¹⁰¹

The second significant domain with which Edwards occupies himself is the family. Alongside the incipient deterioration or displacement of men's traditional role as provider, Edwards notes that the 'rise in rates of divorce, more commonly filed by women than by men, further undermines any [...] status the stereotypically gendered nuclear family may have had or still has'.¹⁰² Rising divorce rates link Edwards's brief examination of the family to sexuality, the third domain that is of concern here. Edwards notes the emergence of a 'sense of increasing pressure surrounding men's personal development and capacities' in terms of 'men's inner emotional happiness and expression', which, he argues, is linked with 'the perception of women's rising expectations sexually

⁹⁷ Tim Edwards, *Cultures of Masculinity* (London; New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 7.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 9

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 12

and emotionally in the wake of second-wave feminism, often linked with a greater sense of their sexual and emotional independence from men'.¹⁰³

The mode of masculinity that Philipp embodies—and the broader field of gender relations of which it is a product—resonate to a considerable degree with the symptoms of the 'masculine crisis' that Edwards lays out. Philipp's occupation as a writer and the fact that he is suffering from writers block suggest an inability to pursue the successful professional career that Edwards cites as a traditional locus of masculinity. In Philipp's case, the link between masculinity and the public sphere is also severed; Philipp leaves the villa on only one occasion in the course of the novel, in order to attend a protest march. The novel in fact constitutes the public sphere as a predominantly feminine domain. The only character who pursues a successful career is Philipp's girlfriend, Johanna Haug.

Philipp's capacity for manual labour is also proven to be lacking. He initially attributes his lack of motivation to the pigeons in the attic, but subsequently qualifies this reasoning: 'Nicht, dass seine Moral sonderlich gut oder seine Lust sonderlich groß wäre. Doch es würde Hoffnung bestehen' (*Gut*, p. 92). Perhaps more significantly, though, Philipp consistently displays insecurity with regard to his masculinity, which is manifest in his perception of his physical appearance. Early in the novel, Philipp inspects himself in the mirror and is forced to acknowledge that 'an ihm nicht viel dran ist', a circumstance that he attempts to reverse by doing press-ups.

In addition, Philipp occupies a passive role in his relationship with Johanna. Not only has he 'sich längst damit abgefunden [...] Nummer Zwei zu sein' (*Gut*, p. 94)—that is, to accept a role subordinate to that of Johanna's husband—he also neglects to take the initiative in the context of the relationship, so that it is left up to Johanna to determine the timing and duration of their encounters. Philipp's lack of security finds its most concrete expression in his concerns surrounding his relationship with Johanna. Hans Joachim Hahn notes that Philipp's 'sexuelle Aktivitäten [...] verlaufen hastig und erzeugen nur augenblickliche Lustgefühle, weil Philipp weiß, dass ihm die Geliebte nur auf Zeit

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 13.

gehört'.¹⁰⁴ Yet the male bravado with which these sexual encounters are connected—expressed most concretely in Philipp's demand for 'Ein Bier in Texas ein Besuch beim Schlamm-Catchen und das Sex ohne Kondom Privileg fortan für mich' (*Gut*, p. 95)—masks a desire for the security provided by the gendered nuclear family whose prominence in contemporary Vienna is shown to have been undermined. Philipp fantasizes that 'Wir könnten zusammenziehen, Johanna würde mich nie betrügen, oder nur sehr selten. Wir könnten rasch ein Kind machen oder zwei und—nein, das wird nicht passieren'. (*Gut*, p. 95)

The crisis of masculinity that Geiger portrays is mirrored in his representation of national and familial identity, the mechanics of which undergo a pronounced transformation in the sections of *Es geht uns gut* that relate to Philipp. In order to understand this transformation, we need to examine briefly a key alteration at the level of narrated topography that occurs in these sections of the novel. I have noted already that the Sterks' villa conforms to a number of the central characteristics that Foucault ascribed to the heterotopia, so that it constitutes a space in which the national and the familial coalesce. The topographical dynamics of the novel's historical sections, though, complement the villa's function as representative of the Austrian nation with the representation of events that occur in the broader national context. As I note above, however, Vienna itself remains 'strangely masked', so that the hierarchy of narrated places in the novel's historical sections is reduced to an interaction between the national and the familial. In the 'contemporary' sections of *Es geht uns gut*, meanwhile, references to events in the broader national sphere are conspicuously absent. As a result, the Sterks' villa—by virtue of the relics of Austrian history contained within it—becomes the only domain in which the nation is represented. In the contemporary sections of the novel, in short, the nation itself is drawn into the private sphere.

This topographical shift has key implications for our understanding of the relationship between the national and the familial that Geiger sets up in the contemporary Vienna of *Es geht uns gut*. While the topographical separation of the two spheres in the sections of the novel that relate to Richard Sterk sets up a

¹⁰⁴ Hahn, 'Beobachtungen', p. 282.

relationship between them that highlights their mutually implicative character, their coalescence in Geiger's contemporary Vienna indicates a relationship of equivalence between them. On the basis of this reading, it becomes necessary to review those readings of *Es geht uns gut* that posit Philipp's efforts to clear out the villa as indicative of a crisis of familial identity. In fact, the villa's dual status as a locus of the national and the familial suggests that the resonance of this crisis also extends to Philipp's national identity. Significantly, the circumstances surrounding the villa's excavation add a third term to this two-fold crisis. Philipp's attitude to the *Aufräumarbeiten*, and the additional help that he requires eventually to complete it, suggest that his familial and national identity crises are bound up intimately with a crisis of masculinity.

If we accept the villa's dual status as a locus of the familial and the national, several aspects of its representation in the contemporary sections of *Es geht uns gut* point explicitly to a crisis in both domains. The villa's original condition figures the Austrian nation and the family as decaying and dilapidated, weighed down by fragments of a burdensome history that must necessarily be disposed of 'im großen Stil'. Different elements of the villa's interior allow for a range of—profoundly negative—interpretations of national and genealogical history. At best, these are coded as 'hinfällig, kaputt, nutzlos' (*Gut*, p. 157), the characteristics that Philipp ascribes to the artefacts that he throws away; at worst, they emerge as abject constructs, a condition that is signified clearly by the *Taubendrech* that has accumulated to knee-height in the attic.

Philipp's attitude toward, and handling of, the artefacts that the villa contains is also significant. Toward the end of the novel, Philipp allows Steinwald and Atamanov to sell some of the discarded items, a gesture which, given Atamanov's Ukrainian nationality, can be read as symbolizing the surrender of Austrian cultural capital to other countries. More significant, however, is the profound ambivalence that Philipp displays both to the objects themselves and to the process of discarding them. Although he draws a degree of satisfaction from disposing of the villa's artefacts, Philipp often regrets his actions, or perceives them as taboo. These conflicting responses lead him on one occasion to recover two tankards destined for auction from the boot of

Steinwald and Atanomov's Mercedes, and are equally manifest in his refusal to allow Johanna to take away the grandfather clock in the hall. Read against the background of the villa's status as a key locus of the national, this ambivalence emerges as symbolic of the third generation's ambivalent attitude to Austrian history at large.

Philipp's ambivalence toward the process of clearing out the villa serves an additional purpose: it points up the extent to which the crisis of masculinity that Philipp represents is bound up with the crises in the realms of the nation and the family. Philipp's lack of capacity to undertake efficiently the 'man's work' of manual labour that is required to clean out the villa and restore it to order suggests that the contemporary Austrian male is unable to function effectively as the guardian of the nation, a role that, significantly, is circumscribed by Peter and Richard's positions as soldier and statesman respectively. This circumstance is underlined by the decision to draft in the *Schwarzarbeiter* to assist with the *Aufräumarbeiten*. Significantly, the equivalence between national and masculine identity that Geiger sets up here is sustained as work on the villa progresses. The gradual disposal of the objects that have accumulated in the villa deprives it of the material referents that enabled it to function as the signifier of familial and national identity. Nevertheless, at the end of the novel, the villa itself not only remains standing, but has also been fully renovated. The slippage between the villa's renovated exterior and its evacuated interior allows it to stand as testament only to a lack of meaningful national and familial identity.

Close reading of Philipp's initial encounter with the *Schwarzarbeiter* reveals that his attempt to construct for himself a coherent masculine identity proceeds along similar lines. Philipp's initial response to his 'Gehilfen' inscribes them specifically in discourses surrounding class and politics. He observes that Steinwald and Atamanov 'schauen aus wie eine verspätete Illustration zum Tag der Arbeit' (*Gut*, p. 131), a reference that marks the *Arbeiter* explicitly as members of the (socialist) proletariat. This activation of class discourses allows Philipp to establish what he perceives to be a position of authority over Steinwald and Atamanov, which he attempts to cement by remonstrating with them for having arrived unprepared for work. Philipp's scolding, which includes

a reference to the BBC television programme, *The Onedin Line*, also highlights his possession of superior cultural capital, while simultaneously carrying connotations of economic prosperity. Steinwald's response to Philipp's dressing-down, though, reverses its intended effect:

—Wollt ihr behaupten, ihr habt die Folge, in der James Onedin eine Ladung Guano aufnimmt, versäumt habt? In Südamerika, auf den Galapagosinseln, im Freien, am Meer! Was glaubt ihr wie das erst auf meinem Dachboden—?

Aber der Schwarzarbeiter mit dem Hut, Steinwald, drückt sich an Philipp vorbei ins Haus.

—Werden das Kind schon schaukeln, gestatten? (*Gut*, p. 131)

Philipp's power-struggle with Steinwald continues as their first encounter progresses. Philipp perceives the sight of his attic to have robbed the *Schwarzarbeiter* of 'die Initiative [...], die sie kurzfristig ergriffen haben im fälschlichen Glauben, mit allem und jedem fertig zu werden' (*Gut*, p. 132), and regains the control over space of which their forced entry into villa temporarily deprived him: 'Er dirigiert die beiden zum Küchentisch' (*Gut*, p. 132). Philipp's decision to send the *Arbeiter* shopping while he waits at home once more establishes his combination of economic and social superiority. Philipp emerges here as a bourgeois 'man of leisure' who has the necessary financial resources to pay for his chores to be undertaken by others of a lower social standing. Yet Steinwald finds another opportunity to undercut Philipp's perceived authority:

Auf die Frage, ob er ebenfalls Gummistiefel brauche, antwortet er

—Gelbe, Größe 42.

—Also 41, verbessert ihn Steinwald, dies, wie alles, in einem sehr nüchternen, ruhigen Ton, so daß Philipp beschließt sich zu widersprechen. Er besteht lediglich darauf, daß die Schuhe gelb sein müssen, gelb mit innen rot. (*Gut*, p. 132)

The final stage of this ironic power-play is evident in Philipp's reaction to the boots that he receives. He maintains that 'die sitzen so la la: eine Nummer größer hätte es auch getan', and notes with satisfaction that their green soles are 'passend zu seinem Lieblingshemd' (*Gut*, p. 135). Subsequently, he expresses a desire to have his photograph taken with Steinwald and Atamanov, and suggests that the contrast between his yellow boots and the grey ones belonging to the *Arbeiter* will mark him out as the 'hochstehende Person' in the group.

The scenario that I sketch above can be conceived usefully as a conflict between two structures of power, one based on class, and the other on

masculinity. Despite the degree of Philipp's conformity to the contemporary norm that has emerged as a result of the supposed 'crisis' of masculinity, his interaction with the *Arbeiter* suggests that he is able to derive a sense of authority from his elevated social status and economic prosperity. The arrival of Steinwald and Atamanov sets Philipp's masculinity against an alternative construction that approximates more obviously the norm that the contemporary crisis is perceived to have undercut. Steinwald's authority stems from a combination of stoicism and aggression, traits that are consistently coded as masculine. Subsequent events, furthermore, reveal that both Steinwald and Atamanov also possess a highly developed work ethic and a sense of integrity, as well as a high degree of physical toughness. The juxtaposition of these two discrete forms of masculinity in the foregoing scenario points up the fragility of the authority that Philipp is able to derive from his superior economic and social status, an authority that is not, however, underpinned by the masculine characteristics of the *Schwarzarbeiter*. Steinwald is able to undercut Philipp's perceived authority either through asserting his own strength (barging past Philipp to gain entry to the house), or by questioning the degree of Philipp's ability to emulate normative masculine characteristics (by questioning his own perception of his physical size). Later in the novel, this attempt to undermine Philipp's authority extends to encompass his attitude to work. On discovering that Philipp is a writer, Steinwald responds '—Der Finger in der Nase dichtet auch' (*Gut*, p. 335). In much the same way as the villa is reduced to an empty signifier that attests only to a lack of coherent national identity, therefore, Philipp's sense of masculine authority is rendered meaningless because it is based on referents that are not themselves coded explicitly as masculine.

In Geiger's contemporary Vienna, then, the crisis that has befallen both masculine and national identity is shown to have reduced both categories to meaningless constructs that are capable of signifying only their own absence. But as well as highlighting the insecure foundations on which both masculine and national identity are constructed in Geiger's post-war Austria, the arrival of the *Schwarzarbeiter* offers Philipp a potentially viable means of accessing the coherent sense of masculine identity that is not available to him there. This

opportunity emerges as a result of Philipp's interaction with Atamanov, whose masculine identity diverges from Steinwald's in two important ways. First, and most significantly, we are informed relatively early in the novel that Atamanov is working in Vienna in order to earn money to pay for his impending wedding. Second, Atamanov's Ukrainian background marks his masculinity *a priori* as the product of an alternative field of gender relations. Two elements of the Ukrainian gender order are significant for our purposes. First, it corresponds precisely to the patriarchal structure that is shown to have been undermined in contemporary Vienna. Second, it entails a positive and mutually-supportive relationship between masculinity and the nation. Tetyana Burchak provides the following useful summary of Ukrainian gender relations:

[P]ost-Soviet Ukraine has seen an increase in the popularity of traditional views about men's and women's roles. Accordingly, men's success is measured by achievements in professional life, while the primary realm of women's self-fulfilment is the family and keeping home and hearth. The post-Soviet period has thus been characterized by the growing legitimization of men's dominant position in the public sphere and more encouragement for women to move into the private sphere. [...] Traditional gender models have often been presented as a way to revitalize the Ukrainian nation, to preserve the family, and to renew moral traditions that the Soviet system destroyed. Some theorists have called this post-Soviet return to tradition in the gender regime [...] a 'patriarchal renaissance' [...].¹⁰⁵

The relevance of Bureychak's observations for our purposes becomes clear on examining the dynamics of Philipp's interaction with Atamanov. While the former's relationship with Steinwald is marked by a sense of conflict, his response to Atamanov suggests a degree of identification. For our purposes, this circumstance finds its most significant expression in Philipp's response to the Ukrainian *Tanzmusik* that Atamanov is planning to have played at his wedding:

Philipp mag ausschließlich die Casette, die Atamanov gehört. Sie ist mit ukrainischer Tanzmusik bespielt und, wenn Philipp es richtig verstanden hat, der Hauptgrund oder wenigstens einer der Gründe, weshalb Antamanov in Hinblick auf seine bevorstehende Vermählung in Geldnöten steckt. Atamanov scheint entschlossen, die teuerste Kapelle zu engagieren, die bei ihm daheim aufzutreiben ist, acht Mann, ein halbes Orchester. (*Gut*, p. 190)

Philipp's exclusive preference for Atamanov's wedding music is significant, because it encodes within it a positive and mutually-supportive relationship

¹⁰⁵ Tatyana Bureychak, 'Masculinity in Soviet and Post-Soviet Ukraine: Models and their implications', in *Gender, Politics and Society in Ukraine*, ed. by Olena Hanvisky and Anastasiya Salnykova (Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 2010), pp. 483-528 (p. 507).

between masculinity, the (patriarchal) family and the nation, the three terms whose configuration in contemporary Vienna has induced in Philipp a three-fold identity crisis. Read against this background, Philipp's decision to accompany the *Schwarzarbeiter* to the Ukraine can be seen as an attempt to establish for himself the authentic sense of masculine identity denied him by the conditions that prevail in contemporary Austria, and to realise his underlying desire for a return to traditional family values.

Yet in view of the ways in which historical constructions of masculinity are represented in *Es geht uns gut*, a brief examination of the gender order into which Philipp apparently wishes to integrate himself sets alarm bells ringing. Bureychak's observations on the system of gender relations that operates in the Ukraine suggests parallels with the traditional bourgeois model occupied—unsuccessfully—by Richard Sterk. The existential turmoil catalysed by Richard's inability to conform to traditional gender norms necessarily undercuts any positive connotations that Philipp's decision to emigrate might superficially have possessed. For Geiger, it would seem, the 'crisis' of masculinity is not merely a contemporary phenomenon; nor is it the result of men's perceived loss of power in particular social institutions. The 'crisis of masculinity' for Geiger seemingly stems from the inability of the masculine subject to fulfil adequately the terms of the "ideal" meanings of manhood circulating within that subject's particular cultural setting and communities'.¹⁰⁶ For Geiger, in other words, 'masculinity is not in crisis, it is crisis'.¹⁰⁷

At the outset of this chapter, I referred to Paul Jandl's suggestion that the work of Austrian literature's 'new generation' is suggestive of a 'Paradigmenwechsel'.¹⁰⁸ For Jandl, the absence from the work of the new generation of the 'brutale Provinz' and 'die politisch missbrauchte Sprache' renders their writing 'harmlos'.¹⁰⁹ My reading of Geiger's novel, however, suggests that Jandl's comments are in need of qualification. While his suggestion that Geiger represents Austrian history only 'im milden Schein der Lampe' is

¹⁰⁶ Whitehead, *Men*, p. 210.

¹⁰⁷ Edwards, *Cultures*, p. 17.

¹⁰⁸ Jandl, 'Tälern', para. 6.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 10.

valid,¹¹⁰ Jandl neglects to consider Geiger's representation of present-day Vienna, an oversight that leads him to underestimate the socially-critical resonance that can be attributed to Geiger's novel. As we have seen, Geiger represents present-day Austria as a nation in crisis, which is reduced, through its metonymic representation in the Sterks' villa, to an empty signifier devoid of a meaningful referent. Yet the prominence in *Es geht uns gut* of the protagonists' struggles with their own masculinity means that this element of social criticism occupies a subordinate position. In combination, Geiger's sustained engagement with the familial sphere and his protagonists' overriding concern with their own developmental trajectories are indicative of a nascent 'turn inward'. Yet this turn inward also facilitates a further shift outward. Geiger's engagement with such generic themes as masculinity and the family allows the novel's socially-critical resonance to transcend the boundaries of Austria's national community. Geiger's novel also provides evidence of a further emergent transformation, this time with regard to the relationship between the body and space. Geiger's protagonists display an ability to manipulate and dominate the domestic and cultural spheres that they inhabit. They therefore evince a level of mastery over space that is absent from the representations of the subject in the novels discussed in previous chapters. As we will see in Chapter Five, these key developments—the turn inward and the transformed relationship between body and space—gain additional momentum in Thomas Stangl's *Ihre Musik*.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

CHAPTER 5:

WALKING IN THE WRITTEN CITY:

THOMAS STANGL'S *IHRE MUSIK*.

Writing in 2008 in the Austrian daily *Der Standard*, Sebastian Fasthuber describes the development of Austrian writing 'in den letzten Jahrzehnten' as follows:

Stillstand lässt sich der österreichischen Literaturszene derzeit wahrlich nicht vorwerfen. Müsste man die Entwicklung in den vergangenen Jahrzehnten übermäßig gerafft zusammenfassen, ergäbe sich wohl folgendes Bild: Lange Zeit dominierten die Avantgarde und das Sprachexperiment, zuletzt wurde der Plot immer wichtiger und das Erzählen zur Mode. Nun scheint bereits eine Rückbesinnung auf die Sprache in Gang zu kommen.¹

Fasthuber's summary is significant because it reaches beyond the work of Kehlmann, Glavinic and their colleagues, concentrating instead on a still younger group of fledgling authors 'die gerade ihre ersten Bücher verlegt haben'.² Fasthuber notes that works by such writers as Ann Cotten, Regina Hilber, Hanno Millesi, Andrea Winkler, Gerhild Steinbuch, Michaela Falkner, Sophie Anna Reyer and Bernhard Strobel 'konzentrier[en] sich wieder stärker auf die Form als auf den Inhalt. [...] In ihren Texten liegt die Betonung auf den Zwischentönen, die erfahrungsgemäß von einer kleineren Leserschaft aufgefangen werden'.³ More significantly, however, Fasthuber's comments are also instructive with regard to the pitfalls that are associated with any attempt to illustrate developments in literary history. The overly schematic character of the tripartite chronology that Fasthuber sets up leads him to underplay the complexity of Austria's literary landscape by obscuring from view the work of those writers who diverge from the aesthetic position that dominated during a particular period. Fasthuber's observations also raise the question of which stakeholders are involved in determining the fluctuating fashions that govern the literary market.

¹ Sebastian Fasthuber, 'Randexistenzen, Zwischentöne', *Der Standard*, 31 March 2008, para. 1 < <http://derstandard.at/3279075> > [Accessed 02 April 2012]

² Ibid. para 2.

³ Ibid.

Of particular interest in the context of this thesis is the second of the three developments that Fasthuber identifies. Although he neglects to provide specific dates for the transformations that he describes, subsequent observations confirm that Fasthuber's allusions to increasing emphasis on plot and to a newly-discovered enthusiasm for 'Erzählen' as an authorial enterprise are intended to encapsulate the period that saw the meteoric ascendancy of the so-called 'neue Erzähler'.⁴ Verena Holler traces the origins of this development to the year 2000: until this point, she notes, such authors as Daniel Kehlmann, Thomas Glavinic and Martin Amanshauser had yet to find a firm footing in critical discourse, and had failed to attract attention from judging panels at literary competitions.⁵

Fasthuber's blanket characterization of the period before 2008 as one dominated by a new-found fondness for the process of story-telling is understandable in view of the achievements of the 'neue Erzähler'. As Alexander Kluy notes, the unparalleled commercial success of Daniel Kehlmann's *Die Vermessung der Welt*,⁶ and its appearance in the shortlist for the first *Deutscher Buchpreis* alongside the eventual winner, Geiger's *Es geht uns gut*, are elements of a nascent 'Literaturwunder',⁷ which began to take on concrete form after Austrian literature's widely-proclaimed 'Jahrhundertherbst' of 2007. The 'neue Erzähler' rose to prominence at a time when, as Daniela Strigl suggests, 'man [...] längst [genug] hatte von der rot-weiß-roten Selbstbespiegelung im Lichte einer düsteren Vergangenheit',⁸ and, as I stated in the previous chapter, their work was received widely as a much-needed antidote to the mixture of

⁴ Cf. Verena Holler, 'Autonomie und Heteronomie—das Profane und das Kulturelle: Überlegungen zum österreichischen Literaturbetrieb der letzten Jahre', *LiThes*, 1 (2008), 52-71 (p. 60). < http://lithes.uni-graz.at/lithes/beitraege08_01/lithes08_01_holler_autonomie.pdf > [Accessed 02 April 2012].

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Klaus Zeyringer notes that the *Die Vermessung der Welt* constitutes '[...] den seit 1945 größten Verkaufserfolg eines Sprachkunstwerkes eines österreichischen Schriftstellers', *Österreichische Literatur seit 1945*, p. 432.

⁷ Alexander Kluy, 'Literaturwunder Made in Austria', *Büchereiperspektiven*, 01/11 (2011), 8-9 (p. 8)

⁸ Daniela Strigl, 'Auswärtssiege, Sittenbilder, Bilderbögen', *Büchereiperspektiven*, 01/11 (2011), 2-5 (p. 3).

‘Erzählboykott, literarischer Trauerarbeit und kollektiver Selbstzerfleischung’ that had been the staple of Austrian writing since the 1960s.⁹

Yet at the same time, Fasthuber’s chronology implies that the aesthetic tastes of Austrian writers during the early years of the 2000s were largely monolithic, a suggestion which, however, is belied by other critical assessments of Austria’s *Literaturbetrieb* during the same period. Klaus Zeyringer’s account, for example, draws on an article written in 2005 by Paul Pechmann for the Graz-based literary journal, *perspektive*. Echoing the opinion that Zeyringer attributes to Joseph Winkler, Anne Mitgutsch and Julian Schütting, that ‘Unterhaltung zerstöre Literatur und Kultur’,¹⁰ Pechmann bemoans ‘[d]ie Verdrängung schwerer zu rezipierender Sprachkunst durch leichtgängige Belletristik’,¹¹ and an apparent transformation in the literary establishment’s attitude to so-called ‘Unterhaltungsliteratur’:

In germanistischen Seminaren und akademischen Publikationen, im Feuilleton ebenso wie in Literaturhäusern und auf Festivals verhandelt man mittlerweile Unterhaltungsliteratur—freilich nicht ausdrücklichen Schund oder Schemaliteratur, sondern sogenannte gehaltvolle Belletristik, wie z.Bsp den sozialkritischen Kriminalroman—als handele es sich um relevante Texte.¹²

Pechmann subsequently turns his attention to the situation in Austria, where, he contends, the dichotomous relationship between ‘Unterhaltungsliteratur’ and ‘avancierte Literatur’ is mirrored in the bipolar structure of the *Literaturbetrieb*. Pechmann writes:

Neben dem kapitalintensiven Markt [...] existiert seit gut drei Jahrzehnten ein Literatursystem, das zu einem guten Teil oder zur Gänze aus der öffentlichen Hand alimentiert wird. In diesem ‘geschützten’ Bereich kann eine avancierte Literatur der Formbesonderung ihren Bestand erhalten [...].¹³

While Zeyringer quite rightly takes issue with his elitist overarching argument—that ‘avancierte Literatur’ can flourish exclusively in ‘marktfernen Zonen’, and that success on the literary market stands in inverse proportion to the level of ‘dichterischer Erkenntnisgewinn’ achieved in a particular text,¹⁴

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Paul Pechmann, ‘Vom Verschwinden marktferner Räume: Einleitungsstatement’, *perspektive*, 54/55 (2006-2007), 5-10 (p. 6).

¹² Ibid., p. 5.

¹³ Ibid, pp. 6-7.

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 5. Zeyringer’s comments are to be found in *Österreichische Literatur seit 1945: Überblicke, Einschnitte, Wegmarken* (Innsbruck; Vienna: StudienVerlag, 2008), pp. 434-36.

Pechmann's observations point up the existence of a trend that stands in direct opposition to the 'Lust am Erzählen' that provides Festhuber with a schematic label for Austrian writing of the early 2000s. Verena Holler confirms that Austria's *Literaturbetrieb* experienced a 'Dichotomisierung' during the years after the *Jahrtausendwechsel*.¹⁵ Alongside Kehlmann, Glavinic and Amanshauser, for Holler the main representatives of the 'Renaissance des Erzählens',¹⁶ she notes the emergence during the early 2000s of a group of writers 'Autoren, die sich [...] dezidiert als Erben einer sprachkritischen Tradition, als Erben der arrivierten Avantgarde verstanden wissen wollten'.¹⁷ Among this group of writers, who occupy 'mittlere Positionen' on Austria's 'literarischem Feld',¹⁸ Holler lists Klaus Handl, Franzobel, Bettina Galvagni, Richard Obermayr, Kathrin Roggla, Bettina Balaka, and Thomas Stangl.¹⁹ While the 'ausgeprägtes Sprach- und Formbewusstsein' inherited from the *Wiener Gruppe* may be more pronounced in the work of Strobel and his colleagues, Pechmann's comments, substantiated by Holler, suggest that the roots of this 'Rückbesinnung auf die Sprache' can be found in the work of a generation dominated by authors who have been widely credited with restoring the popularity of 'klar erzählte Geschichten'.²⁰ Read against this background, Fasthuber's chronology, however schematic, proves mistaken.

I have taken Fasthuber to task at some length here because his schematic approach—no doubt necessitated by the limited scope for comment that a newspaper article offers—encapsulates a broader trend that is visible in critical responses to contemporary Austrian writing. The commercial success of the 'neue Erzähler', particularly that of Glavinic and Kehlmann, has translated into a

¹⁵ Holler, 'Heteronomie', p. 16 n. 25.

¹⁶ Cf. Helmut Gollner, *Die Wahrheit lügen: die Renaissance des Erzählens in der jungen österreichischen Literatur* (Vienna; Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2004).

¹⁷ Holler, 'Heteronomie', p. 61.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 60, n. 25.

²⁰ Sebastian Fasthuber, 'Randexistenzen, Zwischentöne', para 1. Cf. Klaus Zeyringer, 'Österreichische Literatur 2000: Erzählen an den "Rändern", "Neues Erzählen"', in *Österreichische Literatur zwischen den Kulturen: internationale Konferenz Veliko Târnovo, Oktober 2006*, ed. by Iris Hipfl and Raliza Ivanova (St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 2008), pp. 13-49 (p. 16). Zeyringer quotes Thomas Glavinic as follows 'die interessantesten Werke der Weltliteratur sind ganz klar erzählte Geschichten [...]. Auf der ganzen Welt ist Erzählen möglich, nur bei uns in den letzten 40 Jahren nicht. Man hat ja gesehen, wo sie hingekommen sind. Es hat sie kein Mensch gelesen'. Cf. Helmut Gollner, 'Das Gespräch', *Literatur und Kritik*, 345/346 (2000), 26-51 (p. 34).

high level of academic interest internationally, while work by those authors who continue to fly the flag of the 'arrivierte Avantgarde' has yet to find firm footing in critical discourse beyond Austria's borders. Given critics' insistence that 'diversity is one of the key characteristics of contemporary German-language literature',²¹ an attempt to draw attention to the contribution of this much-neglected group of young Austrian writers constitutes one of the key contributions that this thesis might usefully make to the field of Austrian Studies. But the need to examine this countertrend is rendered all the more pressing in view of the goals that this thesis pursues. Given the long-standing connection in post-war Austrian writing between linguistic and social criticism, which is founded in the conviction that 'Gesellschaftskritik kann nur durch Sprachkritik erfolgen',²² critical engagement with the work of a writer who remains indebted to Austria's avant-garde is an essential step in any attempt to trace the evolution of the socially-critical impulse in contemporary Austrian writing. One such writer is Thomas Stangl, whose debut novel, *Der einzige Ort*, appeared in 2004. Published by Droschl of Graz, 'wo man es nicht gerade darauf anlegt, künftige Bestseller zu verlegen',²³ *Der einzige Ort* won Stangl the *Aspekte-Literaturpreis* for the best Germanophone debut. Subsequent accolades have included the *Literaturförderpreis des Österreichischen Bundeskanzleramts* and most recently the *Erich-Fried-Preis*, which was awarded in 2011 by Barbara Frischmuth. Reviews of Stangl's novels feed explicitly into the debate on the relationship between 'Unterhaltungsliteratur' and 'avancierte Literatur' to which Pechmann's article contributes. Christoph Bartmann, writing in *Die Presse*, maintains that Stangl's second novel, *Ihre Musik*, 'uns die Augen öffnet [...] auf eine Weise, dass man denkt, erst mit solchen Büchern fange, jenseits der guten Unterhaltung, die Literatur überhaupt wieder an'.²⁴

²¹ Stuart Taberner (ed), *The Novel in German since 1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. i.

²² Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, *Bruchlinien: Vorlesungen zur österreichischen Gegenwartsliteratur*, 3rd edn (Vienna; Salzburg: Residenz, 2010), p. 434.

²³ Weiland Freund, 'Zwischen allen Klammern', *Die Welt*, 6 January 2007, <<http://www.welt.de/print-welt/article706572/Zwischen-allen-Klammern.html>> [Accessed 29 March 2011], para. 2.

²⁴ Christoph Bartmann, cited in <http://www.droschl.com/programm/buch.php?book_id=482> [Accessed 29 March 2011].

It is Stangl's second novel, published in 2006, which I explore in this final chapter. In his review of *Ihre Musik*, Weiland Freund, the literary critic for the German daily *Die Welt*, provides a brief insight into its central preoccupations, as well as relating Stangl's motivation for writing the novel. Freund, apparently drawing on personal conversation or correspondence with the author, gives the following summary of the circumstances that surrounded the novel's production:

Der neue Roman nahm seinen Ursprung in einer Zeitungsnotiz: Eine schwer an multipler Sklerose erkrankte Frau hatte die weitere Behandlung verweigert und war in der Wohnung, die sie mit ihrer Mutter teilte, einsam und unbemerkt gestorben. Stangl forscht den Gründen für diesen bedrückenden Entschluss (von Tochter und Mutter) nach—doch seine Erkundung führt ihn nicht in die tiefsten Tiefen einer Psyche, sondern ins tiefste Wien hinein. 'Ich habe versucht', erklärt Stangl, 'die Geschichten der beiden Protagonistinnen vom Ort her zu erzählen'.²⁵

Stangl's observations as relayed through Freund confirm that *Ihre Musik* offers a brand of social criticism that differs markedly from that visible in the novels of Gstrein, Faschinger and Rabinovici. Seemingly, the nation itself is no longer the object of the author's critical gaze. The novel is not intended as a polemic that highlights the repressive influence of the key discourses that structure Austrian national identity, nor does it display the same critical engagement with Austria's history that provides the foundation for Geiger's *Es geht uns gut*. Instead, it is best described as a critical engagement with the quotidian: it narrates the everyday lives of mother and daughter Emilia and Dora Degan, who share an apartment in Vienna's second district, *Leopoldstadt*. Emilia works occasionally as a lecturer at the University of Vienna and publishes articles in a left-wing magazine, although she confesses surprise that her work continues to be accepted.²⁶ Dora, meanwhile, is writing a doctoral dissertation on the mystic Theresa of Avila, but decides during the novel's first episode not to attend her *Abschlussprüfung*. The departure point for the narrative is provided by Dora, who, having contracted multiple sclerosis,

²⁵ Freund, 'Zwischen allen Klammern', *Die Welt*, 6 January 2007, <http://www.welt.de/print-welt/article706572/Zwischen_allen_Klammern.html> [Accessed 29 March 2011], para. 15. Freund is clearly drawing here on observations made by the author, which, however, were not published in full together with the review.

²⁶ Thomas Stangl, *Ihre Musik: Roman* ([2006] Munich: btb, 2008), p. 154. Further references to this work will appear in the body text, identified as *Musik*.

reminisces about her life before she became ill, as well as relating the physiological, psychological and emotional effects of the disease. Interpolated into Dora's musings and memories are her mother's recollections, which cover a period that stretches from before Dora's birth to a point shortly after she dies. The novel is conspicuously lacking in dialogue: the two protagonists do not speak to one another, and converse only with the marginal characters that they encounter; mostly representatives of the three institutions that feature in the novel: the hospital, the university and the police. Instead, the biographical trajectories of the two women are related solely through interior monologue and are filtered through the narrator, who consistently refers to both protagonists as 'sie'. This technique makes it impossible at times to determine which of the characters is acting as focalizer for the events that are being narrated, and indeed to discern who is the 'owner' of the 'Musik' to which the novel's title refers. This interior monologue is filtered through an *Erzähl-Instanz* who is himself extremely problematic. He has access to the protagonists' apartment, and has lived in their neighbourhood, but his reasons for returning remain mysterious. He is apparently invisible to the protagonists, although he observes their actions from within their immediate vicinity; he claims to be able to fly, and describes his role toward the beginning of the novel as simply 'replaying' the events that he relates (*Musik*, p. 54).

The novel's relatively scant plotline belies the complexity and variety of its thematic preoccupations, which resonate to a considerable degree with the issues at stake in the novels that I have discussed in previous chapters. At the heart of *Ihre Musik* is a thoroughgoing exploration of the city's mutually-constitutive relationship with individual memory and history. The consequences of Dora's physical decline, which results in sustained social withdrawal and melancholic *Selbstentfremdung*, meanwhile, dramatize the mechanics and implications of alienation in the metropolis. These avowedly Benjaminian concerns are accompanied by scenarios that highlight the subject's vulnerability to coercion by the techniques of disciplinarity that emanate from the institutions with which it comes into contact. These issues coalesce most concretely in the detailed descriptions of urban walking that are a recurrent

feature of *Ihre Musik*. It is these accounts of the urban stroll that provide the framework for the argument to be pursued in the course of this chapter.

In what follows, I argue that Stangl's representation of the urban stroll reverses completely the polarity of the relationship between the body and the city that is established in *Suche nach M.* and *Wiener Passion*. While both Rabinovici and Faschinger explore in detail how the discourses that mould urban space also shape the subject, thereby founding their narratives on the principle that the city constitutes 'the place of the body's cultural saturation, its takeover by images, representational systems [...] the place where the body is representationally re-explored and re-inscribed', Stangl's novel explores the body's status as 'a cultural product [that] re-inscribes the urban landscape according to its demographic needs'.²⁷ The body's primacy over the city as the determinant of the subject's urban experience is manifest in the three discrete but interlinked functions that Stangl attaches to urban walking. Each of these functions—schematized here respectively as 'reanimation', 'deflection' and 'circumvention'—provides an effective response to a characteristic of Stangl's Vienna that would otherwise work to limit, or to determine the dynamics of, the protagonists' urban experience. Despite the level of historical detail that is encoded in Stangl's representation of the Vienna, I show first that his protagonists perceive the cityscape as a collection of relics, as 'symbolic forms' that have 'persist[ed] beyond the death of the form of life that gave them human vitality'.²⁸ Urban walking offers the protagonists the opportunity to reanimate the urban landscape creatively, re-investing the city with meaning by interpolating into it their own memories, experiences and contingent interpretations. Second, walking is figured as the activity that allows Dora and Emilia to deflect the shocks that are shown to be endemic in the urban experience. Third, walking emerges in Stangl's novel as a highly effective subversive strategy that allows the protagonists to circumvent successfully the subjectivating machinations of disciplinarity.

²⁷ Elizabeth Grosz, *Space, Time and Perversion: Essays on the Politics of Bodies* (New York; London: Routledge, 1995), p. 105.

²⁸ Eric L. Santner, *On Creaturely Life: Rilke, Benjamin, Sebald* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2006) p. 17.

Yet the body's apparent 'triumph' over the city does not render Stangl's representation of the city any more optimistic than those that we have encountered thus far in this thesis, a circumstance that arises from the particular character of the embodied experience that is explored in *Ihre Musik*. Through the plot-strand related to Dora's MS, Stangl introduces into his representation of the interaction between subject and city an element of biological determinism that sets his narrative apart from those that have been examined in previous chapters. Dora's apparent regression is experienced initially as a progression; the effects of her illness enable her to transcend effectively the discourses and disciplinary techniques that structure the status quo. Ultimately, though, her reprieve proves temporary. During the final sections of the novel, the onset of Dora's symptoms results in a radical turn inward. Sitting alone in her armchair, unable to move or to communicate, Dora dies contemplating the fragmented memories of which her biography comprises. Before proceeding, however, I examine the ways in which the unconventional urban experience that the novel examines manifests itself at the level of form.

WRITING THE BODY, WRITING THE CITY

Critical responses to *Ihre Musik* are unanimous in identifying Stangl's lack of faith in linear plot as the foundation of his narrative strategy. Writing in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, for example, Hans-Jürgen Balmes notes that Stangl 'glaubt nicht an Geschichten, sondern an Situationen, die er mit seiner Sprache auslotet'.²⁹ The situation that—in more ways than one—provides the departure point for *Ihre Musik* is Dora's physical decline, which occurs because of the gradual onset of multiple sclerosis. As Paul Jandl notes, 'die tödliche Krankheit der Tochter setzt ein grausames Faktum in eine sonst nur ungefähre

²⁹ Hans Jürgen Balmes, 'Im Wiener Würzlegeflecht', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, n. date <http://sz-shop.sueddeutsche.de/mediathek/shop/Produktdetails/Buch+Ihre_Musik+Thomas_Stangl/1977902.do> [Accessed 01 April 2012], para. 3.

Wirklichkeit'.³⁰ Gisela von Wysocki foregrounds the central role that Dora's disease plays in the novel in the title of her own review, which defines *Ihre Musik* succinctly as 'Doras Fallgeschichte'.³¹ Writing in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, however, Pia Reinacher identifies as one of the novel's major weaknesses an apparent slippage between form and plot. Reinacher professes herself irritated by the 'Erzählmaschine ohne Anfang und Ende' that revolves around the novels 'inhaltliches Zentrum', but 'in keiner Funktion zum Geschehen des Romans steht'.³²

Reinacher's contention is problematic for two reasons: first, it presents form and plot as concepts that can be abstracted from one another; second, it places the terms in a hierarchy that implicitly privileges the latter over the former. This manoeuvre is particularly incongruous in light of other critical responses to *Ihre Musik*—and indeed the publisher's blurb that accompanies it—which identify the formal innovation that provides its foundation as one of the novel's unique selling points. Yet the complexity of the novel's chronological and narrative structures appears at first glance to lend substance to Reinacher's claims. Although its five chapters form a loose chronology, they each consist of fragmented episodes that are marked out visually in the text by wide bands of white space, and whose temporal relationship with one another remains frustratingly opaque.³³ Stangl also makes frequent use of montage, and a number of phrases surface repeatedly in the narrative. The novel's structure is rendered more complex still by unmarked shifts between the perspectives of its focalizers. As Reinacher notes elsewhere in her review, the text lacks any sense of underlying structure or what she calls 'Hierarchien des Erzählten': Stangl's novel assigns the same level of significance to the process of making a cup of

³⁰ Paul Jandl, 'Am Ende ist das Gehen ein Wiederkehren', *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 15 November 2006 <<http://www.nzz.ch/2006/11/15/fe/articleENS4V.html>> [Accessed 01 April 2012], para. 4.

³¹ Gisela von Wysocki, 'Doras Fallgeschichte', *Literaturen: die Zeitschrift für Leser*, 15 September 2009 <<http://www.cicero.de/salon/doras-fallgeschichte/44738>> [Accessed 01 April 2012].

³² Pia Reinacher, 'Sprachbarrieren: Verstörung als Formprinzip; Thomas Stangls neuer Roman *Ihre Musik*', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 22 February 2007 <<http://www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/buecher/rezensionen/belletristik/sprachbarriere-1413181.html>> [Accessed 01 April 2012], para. 4.

³³ Brian McHale discusses the function of 'spaciness' in postmodern texts in his *Postmodernist Fiction* (London; New York: Routledge, 1987), pp. 179-96.

coffee (*Musik*, p. 9) and to Dora's final hours (particularly *Musik* p. 155 ff.). The consequences of all this for the reader are laid out succinctly by Weiland Freund, who notes in his review of *Ihre Musik* that:

Was immer [Stangl] schreibt, entzieht sich. Hat man einen Roman von Thomas Stangl in der Hand, entwickelt man schnell das eigentlich doch widersprüchliche Bedürfnis, ausgerechnet das Geschriebene festhalten zu wollen. Manche Absätze markiert man, als müsse man, auf dem Weg durch den Text, wie Hänsel und Gretel Krumen streuen, dann ertappt man sich dabei, den Zeilen wie ein Erstklässler mit dem Finger zu folgen.³⁴

If we follow Jandl and Wysocki in defining the consequences of Dora's advancing multiple sclerosis as the novel's most significant plot-strand, compelling grounds emerge on which to challenge Reinacher's suggestion that there is no functional link between form and plot in *Ihre Musik*. Scrutinized against this background, the strategies that I outline above emerge as textual and narrative correlatives of the cognitive symptoms that are associated with MS. The body of literature that surrounds multiple sclerosis identifies among its most common symptoms difficulties in 'prioritizing information' and with 'placing events in the correct temporal sequence'.³⁵ These symptoms find their respective structural correlatives in the complex temporality of *Ihre Musik* and its tendency to allocate the same level of significance to every sensation and activity. Lapses in concentration, a recurrent symptom that is experienced by the majority of MS sufferers, are also encoded into the narrative structure of *Ihre Musik*. The focus of the narrative shifts frequently, and usually in an unmarked way, between the perspectives of the novel's two focalizers and that of the narrator. The frequent repeated formulations, meanwhile, provide a narrative parallel for the lack of short-term memory that is perhaps the most pervasive symptom of multiple sclerosis.

The most significant effect of the narrative structure, however, is its apparent ability to replicate the most common cognitive symptoms of MS in its implied reader. Freund's suggestion that 'alles was [Stangl] schreibt, entzieht

³⁴ Freund, 'Zwischen allen Klammern', para. 2.

³⁵ Jill S. Fischer, 'Cognitive Impairment in Multiple Sclerosis', in *Handbook of Multiple Sclerosis*, ed. by Stuart D. Cook (New York; Basel: Decker, 2001), pp. 233-55 (p. 236). For a non-medical introduction to the symptoms of MS, see *Multiple Sclerosis: A Guide for Families*, 3rd edn., ed. by Rosalind C. Kalb (New York: Demos Medical Publishing, 2005). For a biographical account that focuses on the cognitive symptoms of the disease, see Jeffery N. Gringold, *Facing the Cognitive Challenges of Multiple Sclerosis*, 2nd edn (New York: Demos Medical Publishing, 2011).

sich' implies that the narrative resists its readers' attempts to retell it. This contention is reinforced by Klaus Zeyringer's brief analysis of the novel, in which he notes that 'in einer genauen Beschreibung scheint sich die Romanwelt aufzulösen'.³⁶ The content of *Ihre Musik*, therefore, seems to elude the reader's short-term memory. Freund's observations also attest to the increased cognitive effort that is required to negotiate Stangl's novel effectively: the reading process has to be supported by *aides mémoire*, in the form of highlighted paragraphs, and a means of enhancing concentration, namely following the text with a finger. Once more, Freund's reading experience articulates with that of MS sufferers, who report that 'they exert more mental effort on tasks that they previously performed automatically'.³⁷ Freund notes elsewhere that the cognitive effort that the novel demands from its reader is exacerbated by Stangl's constant recourse to parenthetical interpolations. He writes:

In [...] *Ihre Musik* stören zeilenlange, von sperrigen Klammern eingeschlossene Hinzufügungen den Textfluss, der sich vor diesen Hindernissen dann staut; dafür kann man nachher, wenn der lange aufgehaltene Satz sich endlich Bahn bricht, selbst zusehen, wie man den Kopf im Strom der Worte noch oben behält.³⁸

Once more, the experience that Freund describes here resonates with a common manifestation of cognitive dysfunction in multiple sclerosis, namely lapses in 'alternating attention'. Fischer defines 'alternating attention' as the mode in which the subject is required to 'rapidly shift attention from [one] stimulus to another'.³⁹ The content of these parenthetical observations emanates variously from the subject focalizing the event in the narrated present, the 'remembering subject' who resides in the narrative present, or the narrator. Because the 'sperrigen Klammern' are such a pervasive element of Stangl's text, the reader is required to shift the focus of his attention very frequently, not only between the perspectives of the novel's protagonists, but also between the multiple temporal levels at which the events of the novel play out. The narrative discourse arguably becomes 'clogged up' in part because these frequent transitions tax the reader's capacity for 'alternating attention'. An additional

³⁶ Klaus Zeyringer, *Österreichische Literatur seit 1945*, p. 501.

³⁷ Fischer, 'Cognitive impairment', p. 236.

³⁸ Freund, 'Zwischen allen Klammern', para. 3.

³⁹ Fischer, 'Cognitive Impairment', p. 236.

transition occurs at the point ‘wenn der lange aufgehaltene Satz sich endlich Bahn bricht’, because the ‘Strom der Worte’ that Stangl’s novel generates increases the number of textual ‘stimuli’ that the reader is expected to process. Hence the readerly anxiety to which Freund attests, which manifests itself in a fear of ‘drowning’ in Stangl’s ‘Sprach- und Bilderflut’.⁴⁰ It should be noted at this point that this is an anxiety that more than one reviewer has expressed. Fischer notes that ‘attention can be conceptualized as a hierarchy of processes’,⁴¹ of which ‘alternating attention’ is one of the most complex. As a result, she maintains, this form of attention is ‘often impaired’ in multiple sclerosis.

My foregoing observations suggest that the formal idiosyncrasies that dominate the narrative structure of *Ihre Musik* cannot be abstracted from its plot as easily as Reinacher’s comments imply. Stangl’s narrative strategies seemingly serve two separate but interlinked purposes. First, they endow the text *qua* subject with characteristics that replicate the cognitive deficiencies experienced by its main protagonist; second, they duplicate the effects of these deficiencies in the novel’s implied reader. But the narrative structure of *Ihre Musik* is also susceptible to an alternative reading, one that articulates clearly with the conception of the city that informs my reading of *Suche nach M*. In Chapter Three, I scrutinize Rabinovici’s novel through the lens provided by the manifestations of the labyrinthine city that Walter Benjamin constructs in the *Passagenwerk* and in his earlier ‘Denkbilder’. Two of these constructions remain relevant in the context of *Ihre Musik*, where the city is represented on the one hand as a space that is characterized by the interpenetration of phenomena—a quality that Benjamin, writing with Asja Lacis, conceptualized as ‘Porösität’—and on the other as a potential object of archaeological investigation.⁴² In contrast to Rabinovici’s novel, though, the strata that are susceptible to excavation are in this case not historical, but memorial. As we will see in the next section, memory is assigned a compensatory function in *Ihre Musik*, because it provides both protagonists with the means to assign a signifying

⁴⁰ Cf. Reinacher, ‘Sprachbarrieren’, para. 1.

⁴¹ Fischer, ‘Cognitive Impairment’, p. 227.

⁴² Cf. Walter Benjamin and Asja Lacis, ‘Neapel’, in Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, IV: *Kleine Schriften, Baudelaire Übertragungen*, ed. by Timann Rexroth (1972), pp. 307-316.

function to the relics of which the cityscape is comprised. As such, the description of the labyrinth that resonates most obviously with the representation of the city in *Ihre Musik* is the one that emerges from Benjamin's Berlin texts. *Berliner Chronik* and its revised version, *Berliner Kindheit um 1900* are both driven by a thoroughgoing examination of the mutually-constitutive relationship between memory and the metropolis, two constructs whose mutual convolution can be captured in the image of the labyrinth. Graeme Gilloch's reading of the Berlin texts contains two observations that are particularly relevant in the context of *Ihre Musik*. Gilloch notes first that the relationship between metropolis and memory was itself mediated by the interaction between the poles of another dialectical pairing, namely space and time. He writes:

Benjamin links time and space in two ways [...] the journey into the past is a voyage into the distance, and movement in memory is like that in a labyrinth. [...] To move in a labyrinth is a circling around in which one revisits the same places. And yet, such motion indirectly leads towards the heart of things.⁴³

Gilloch's second key observation links the relationship between memory and metropolis to the motif of walking that guides this reading of *Ihre Musik*, because

[...] to journey into the labyrinth is to be a *flâneur*, one who wanders without destination, one who is able to lose himself in the metropolis.⁴⁴

The two manifestations of the labyrinth that I outline above articulate clearly with the multiple functions fulfilled by one of the most conspicuous textual strategies to be deployed in *Ihre Musik*, namely the profusion of parenthetical observations to which I have already alluded. Closer examination of these parentheses reveals that they conform to a number of the characteristics that Foucault ascribes to the heterotopia, some of which I discussed in the previous chapter. The brackets themselves constitute 'a system of opening and closing' that isolates the content of the parenthetical interpolation, 'and makes it penetrable at one and the same time'.⁴⁵ Perhaps the most illuminating of Foucault's 'principles' in the context of Stangl's novel are, once more, the fourth and fifth. As we saw in the Chapter Four, Foucault notes

⁴³ Graeme Gilloch, *Myth and Metropolis* (Cambridge: Polity, 1996), p. 69.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', trans. by Jay Miskowiec, *diacritics*, 16 (1986), 22-27 (p. 26).

that heterotopias have 'the power of juxtaposing in a single real place different spaces and locations that are incompatible with each other',⁴⁶ and that they are 'most often linked to slices in time, which is to say that they open onto [...] heterochronies'.⁴⁷ The relevance of these observations for an analysis of Stangl's narrative strategy becomes clear on examining closely the parenthetical observations that are contained in the following quotation, which is taken from the very beginning of *Ihre Musik*

Sie erinnert sich [...] sie dreht mit der linken Hand den achteckigen Messingdrehknopf bis zum Anschlag, oder eher bis zum weichen, leicht verzögerten Einrasten (wie hat sie es für selbstverständlich halten können) nach rechts, ein Päckchen Zigaretten liegt auf dem Küchentisch. [...] In der Küche ist es hell (es muß ein Sommertag sein, sie sieht sich selbst, ihr Haar, ihren Rücken im Lichtschein aus dem Fenster), sie zündet ein Streichholz an und hält es an den linken vorderen Brenner (ein rostender Stahlring mit kleinen Löchern an der Seite, deren Zahl sie jetzt gerne kennen würde) während sie den Knopf an der Vorderseite des Herds auf die höchste Stufe dreht und einige Sekunden lang niedergedrückt hält. (*Musik*, p. 9)

The event that is related in the foregoing quotation is staged explicitly as a memory, a gesture that perforce inaugurates a split between the remembering and the focalizing subject. Close examination suggests that the content of the parenthetical observations is in part filtered through the perception of the remembering subject: the first indicates retrospective regret, while the temporal marker 'jetzt' that features in the second automatically creates distance between the focalizers of the commentary and the remembered events. Crucially, though, it is impossible to determine with certainty the origin of all the parenthetical observations that we encounter in the foregoing quotation. The suggestion that 'es muß ein Sommertag sein', for example, may be filtered through the perception of the remembering subject or that of the narrator. The bracketed formulations, therefore, can be said to 'juxtapose in a single real [textual] space' perspectives that are incompatible with one another. They combine the perception of the narrator with that of a character focalizer on the one hand, and, on the other, provide a space in which the observations of a subject located in the narrative present can interpenetrate with the perceptions of its younger self.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 25.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

Yet perhaps the most significant of Foucault's principles for our purposes is his insistence that heterotopias are linked to 'distinct slices in time'. While the relevance of this statement is implicit in my previous comment, it can be reinforced most effectively by examining a different extract, taken this time from the second chapter of *Ihre Musik*:

Der Korridor ist fensterlos, aber durch die offenstehende Küchentür und ums Eck vom Gang her durch eine Oberlichte über der Eingangstür dich in Licht und Schattenflächen gerastert; über dem Sessel in ihrem Zimmer (ihr linker Arm zwischen Lehne und Körper gepreßt, der rechte Arm angewinkelt [...]) (*Musik*, p. 46)

The content of this parenthetical observation is particularly incongruous when read in the context of the passage as a whole, the remainder of which describes the internal topography of the protagonists' apartment as viewed from the door of the bathroom, where Dora has just finished brushing her teeth. The description of the sitting figure that is contained in the parentheses recurs in the text on no fewer than eight occasions, and each description is more comprehensive than the last. This escalation of detail culminates in the passage that opens the fifth chapter. It is focalized by Dora, who sits alone in her armchair having refused further treatment, and having also rejected what Emilia perceives as 'das Alsob ihrer Pflegedienste' (*Musik*, p. 154). On this occasion, the description of Dora's posture is free of parentheses, and runs as follows:

Ihr linker Arm ist zwischen Körper und Lehne gepreßt, wie an den Rippen festgewachsen, der rechte Arm angewinkelt, die Hand liegt in ihrem Schoß, sie zieht im Kopf die Krümmung jedes einzelnen Fingers nach, kleine an den ausgetrockneten Gelenken aneinanderscheuernde Knochen, jeder Finger ein Behältnis, ein Wohnraum, kalkige Wände, fremdartige, aber doch menschenähnliche, in den engen Raum hineingezwängte, zerbrochene Wesen im Innern [...]. (*Musik*, p. 161)

The ensuing description of Dora's situation suggests strongly that she is close to death. Her symptoms are so advanced that her efforts to stand up from her chair are rewarded only with a wince (*Musik*, p. 165). Her fingers are described as 'starr' (*Musik*, p. 162), her veins are 'ausgetrocknet' and her posture is compared to that of a dying bird (*Musik*, p. 165). The odour that dominates in the room has become unbearable: as the narrator states, 'wäre ich ein Mensch, könnte ich ihn kaum ertragen'. Finally, Dora perceives the objects in her bedroom as 'closing in' on her:

[...] der Boden, die Wände, die Möbel sind schon fast Teil ihres Körpers [...]. Fühler aus Draht, biegsame, halb lebendige Maschinen greifen nach ihr, langsam frißt sich der Boden hinauf ins Zimmer. (*Musik*, p. 163)

I will return at the end of this chapter to Dora's perception of her surroundings at this point in the novel. It suffices here to note that the contents of the parenthetical observation from the novel's second chapter, which I quote above, are apparently extracted from the more comprehensive description of Dora's situation with which its fifth chapter begins. This circumstance suggests that the earlier parenthetical observation is to be understood as an instance of prolepsis. The parentheses in which it is enclosed are thus linked to a particular 'slice' of the narrative's *histoire*, one that is situated at a juncture subsequent to the events whose narration the parentheses interrupt. In mimicking this key function of the Foucauldian heterotopia, however, these parentheses endow the narrative with a number of attributes that Benjamin ascribed to the city. Stangl's use of parentheses facilitates a form of temporal layering that enables past, present and future to interpenetrate. Thus, the narrative itself is rendered at once palimpsestic and 'porös', characteristics which, as we saw in Chapter Three, are central to Benjamin's visions of Paris and Naples respectively.

A second technique that is worthy of closer examination here is that of repetition, which articulates clearly with Benjamin's theorization of the city and of memory as labyrinthine figures. I have pointed out already that the narrative discourse of *Ihre Musik* returns frequently to a particular point in time, namely the period that immediately precedes Dora's demise. But this end-point is not the only juncture in Dora's biography that is encountered repeatedly in Stangl's novel. Both protagonists frequently scrutinize a photograph that depicts Dora as a girl, standing at a cliff-edge (*Musik*, pp. 16, 55, 115, 165). The protagonists' repeated glances at the image provide catalysts for extensive contemplation of the nature of memory and of the complex temporality of biography. Highlighting the repetitious nature of memory, for example, Dora notes that 'Momente, die in Alben ruhen, sind in ihrem Kopf verdoppelt' (*Musik*, p. 55). A later glance at the photograph during the final stages of Dora's illness provokes in Emilia the realization that the moment encapsulated in it might have provided the departure point for 'jede Zukunft [...] jede andere Zukunft' (*Musik*, p. 116). The constant return to this point in Dora's biography is complemented

in the novel by frequent encounters with particular elements of the cityscape, the most ubiquitous of which are the market stalls that occupy the 'Platz' onto which the protagonists' apartment fronts. Both protagonists also pass by the 'Speditionsgebäude' on *Castellezgasse* on numerous occasions (*Musik*, p. 60, p. 52), as well as Emilia's old school building, identifiable by its gate, which is adorned with stone lions' heads (*Musik*, pp. 120, 128, 144). The use of repetition in *Ihre Musik* thus constitutes both memory and the city as labyrinthine figures that are characterized, as Gilloch suggests, by a 'circling around in which one visits the same places'.

Yet perhaps the most significant instance of repetition that we encounter in *Ihre Musik* takes place at the level of form. The protagonists' frequent returns to the market stalls in front of their apartment and their repeated glances at the photograph of Dora mean that descriptions of these surface repeatedly in the text. Crucially, though, these descriptions home in consistently on the same characteristics—the 'nackte kopflose Hühner' on sale at the market, or the dress that Dora is wearing and the *Steilküste* in the background—so that each description recalls explicitly those that have gone before. The use of repetition at a textual level therefore endows the narrative itself with a distinctly labyrinthine quality, providing a series of spatio-temporal *Fixpunkte* in a text that, as Weiland Freund's review suggests, engenders a sense of disorientation in its implied reader. Once more, the replication of the city's 'labyrinthine' construction in the formal characteristics of the text resonates with critics' observations on the form of Benjamin's Berlin 'memoirs', but at the same time, they point at another set of characteristics that, in conjunction with the technique of repetition, reinforce the labyrinthine quality of Stangl's text. Writing of Benjamin's *Berliner Kindheit um 1900*, for example, Anna Stüssi argues that 'each chapter [...] represents a labyrinthine figure' because 'there is no development, the goal remains hidden [...]'.⁴⁸ Stüssi's references to a lack of development and to 'hidden' goals might just as easily have been lifted from a review of *Ihre Musik*.

⁴⁸ Anna Stüssi, *Erinnerung an die Zukunft: Walter Benjamins Berliner Kindheit um Neunzehnhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977), p. 235.

The numerous resonances examined above between Benjamin's conception of the city and the Vienna of *Ihre Musik*, then, provide the basis for an alternative account of the formal idiosyncrasies that are central to Stangl's novel. As well as inscribing within it the symptoms of multiple sclerosis, the unconventional narrative discourse also replicates characteristics that are central to Benjamin's reading of urban modernity. The Vienna of the novel, and the biographies of its protagonists, are rendered simultaneously labyrinthine, palimpsestic and 'porös'. Placed alongside the text's ability to replicate the symptoms of multiple sclerosis, these characteristics constitute the form of the *Ihre Musik* as the domain in which subject and city converge. Once more, this circumstance articulates with a technique that Graeme Gilloch identifies as the backbone of Walter Benjamin's textual strategy. Gilloch concurs with Stüssi's observations on the 'labyrinthine' character of Benjamin's Berlin texts, but takes her ideas still further. Gilloch identifies a tendency to replicate in the formal properties of a text those characteristics that are also evident in the representation of the city as a key element of Benjamin's 'urban archaeology'. In an analogy that contradicts Rolf Tiedemann, whose introduction to the text likens the *Passagenwerk* material to '[die] Baumaterialien für ein Haus',⁴⁹ Gilloch argues that Benjamin's texts, from the *Denkbilder* through to the *Passagenwerk*, themselves evince a 'city-like' quality. In his chapter on the *Passagenarbeit*, for example, Gilloch maintains that

[...] the experience of the metropolis itself is embedded in the formal properties of the text of the 'Arcades Project'. [...] In other words, the *Passagenarbeit* is best understood not as a description of the urban (text-about-city) but as itself fundamentally urban in character (text-as-city). (*Myth*, p. 92)

Returning to this theme in the conclusion of his book, Gilloch qualifies his original comments. As well as linking the 'urban character' of the *Passagenwerk* explicitly to its labyrinthine qualities, Gilloch underlines his contention that the formal characteristics of the text are not a testament to the city *per se*, but rather to the character of a specific urban experience, an interaction between subject and city that is specific to Parisian modernity. Gilloch writes:

⁴⁹ Rolf Tiedemann, 'Einleitung des Herausgebers', in Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 7 vols., ed. by Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1972-89), V: *Das Passagenwerk*, ed. by Rolf Tiedemann (1982), pp. 9-45 (p. 12).

The *Passagenarbeit* constitutes nothing less than a vast text-as-city, text-as-labyrinth. Its formal properties mimic the very set of urban experiences to which it gives voice. It is animated by the rhythms of the city that it endeavours to record. (*Myth*, p. 182)

When these observations are mapped onto the complex of narrative and textual techniques that Stangl deploys in *Ihre Musik*, their ‘hidden goal’ can—at least provisionally—be discovered. In encoding both symptom and city into the narrative discourse of *Ihre Musik*, Stangl ‘gives voice’ to a highly specific, and highly unconventional, urban experience. The ‘set of rhythms’ that animates the form of *Ihre Musik* is produced by the confluence of a city whose dynamics approximate those of Parisian modernity, and a subject whose interaction with the city is disturbed by the onset of symptoms that are encoded into the narrative fabric of the novel itself. In a manner similar to the *Passagenwerk*, *Ihre Musik* is understood best not as a novel about the interaction between subject and city (text-about-experience) but rather as a novel whose formal elements incorporate the dynamics of that interaction (text-as-experience). It is in this sense that we might usefully interpret Stangl’s suggestion that *Ihre Musik* constitutes an attempt ‘die Geschichte der beiden Frauen vom Ort her zu erzählen’.⁵⁰ This circumstance has important implications for the reading of urban walking to be pursued in the remainder of this chapter. The inscription in the form of the novel of an urban experience that is grounded in the declining physical health of the urban subject negates *a priori* the victory over the city that the activity of urban walking apparently confers on that subject.

THE IMAGE OF HISTORY: EXPERIENCING THE CITY IN *IHRE MUSIK*.

My reading of urban walking in *Wiener Passion* draws primarily on the work of Michel de Certeau. Certeau’s seminal essay on the subject of the urban stroll begins by proposing two diametrically opposed modes of perceiving the city. After a brief excursion on the ‘erotics of knowledge’ associated with the totalizing view of Manhattan that can be achieved from the 110th floor of the World Trade

⁵⁰ Freund, ‘Zwischen allen Klammern’, para. 15.

Centre,⁵¹ Certeau narrates ‘an Icarean fall’⁵² which catapults the subject into the ‘chorus of idle footsteps’ that simultaneously lay claim to and appropriate the urban system.⁵³ The same combination of perspectives is deployed in *Ihre Musik*, where it facilitates an immensely detailed representation of the Viennese cityscape. During their strolls through Vienna, both protagonists pause relatively frequently in order to take in the view of the city from an elevated vantage point. As a result, the novel contains numerous quasi-ekphrastic ‘panoramas’, such as the following, which is focalized by Emilia:

Das Bild, mit der Turm spitze des Domes über den Häusern [...] und über die Brücke, der Baustelle am Eingang der Taborstraße, wo an der Stelle eines abgerissenen Nachkriegsbaus ein Betongewächs schräg aus dem Boden hervorkommt und sich in ein gläsernes Gehäuse hüllt. Sie sieht das Café Spitzer und das Werbeschild des Schwedenkinos am Eingang der Taborstraße, unterm Betongewächs und dem Nachkriegsbau und der schon nach dem Krieg mutwillig geschlagenen Lücke, auf der anderen Straßenseite, unter dem blaugrauen Versicherungshochhaus die Fenster des Restaurants Tonello [...]. (*Musik*, p. 142)

I have quoted the details of this outlook over the city at length because they are typical of the totalizing mode of narration that Stangl uses to represent the cityscape ‘from above’. Significantly, Vienna emerges from the foregoing quotation as a palimpsest: the different features of the narrated cityscape bear witness to the changing aesthetic tastes and mutating cultural values that are encoded in the city’s architecture. Each of the buildings listed in the foregoing description are products of a significant epoch in Vienna’s (mostly recent) history. Café Spitzer, for example, is suggestive of *fin-de-siècle* coffeehouse culture; the *Schwedenkino*, meanwhile, originally received planning permission in 1914, but could not be built until after the First World War. The remainder of the cityscape is dominated by *Nachkriegsbauten*, one of which is in the process of being replaced. In contrast to the representation of the city set forth in *Suche nach M.* and *Es geht uns gut*, the Vienna of *Ihre Musik* is not masked in any way. On the contrary, references to the city’s history abound in Stangl’s text. Alongside the palimpsestic views of the city typified by the foregoing passage, the narrator makes fleeting reference to street-names and commemorative

⁵¹ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. by Steve Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 92.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

plaques, small-scale monuments that enable the cityscape to attest to its own historical evolution. At first glance, therefore, Stangl's Vienna is a vibrant city that is characterized by evolution, urban renewal, and above all by the historical depth that was lacking in *Suche nach M.*

When examined in the light of Benjamin's observations on the connotations of urban renewal and change, though, Stangl's description of Vienna is rendered vulnerable to a less optimistic assessment. For Benjamin, the evolution of architectural forms during modernity did not indicate true historical change, but merely simulated it by '[rearranging] the given'.⁵⁴ This insight is related to one of Benjamin's best-known definitions of modernity as 'das Neue im Zusammenhang des immer schon Dagewesenen',⁵⁵ a characterization that maps neatly onto Stangl's description of the cityscape laid out above. Reminiscent of Certeau's 'wave of verticals',⁵⁶ the dominant elements of the cityscape, from the *Stephansdom* to the *Versicherungshochhaus* and the *Betongewächs*, are merely slightly modified repetitions of the same architectural form. This interdependency of change and the ever-same is made explicit in the concluding section of Emilia's description of the city. Glancing at the uniformed guards on the roof of the OPEC headquarters, she notes that '[...] sie weiß, daß nichts Besonderes passieren kann; nicht jetzt und niemals in der Zukunft. Es kann nichts Besonderes mehr passieren' (*Musik*, p. 143).

A second problematic element of the foregoing description is the narrator's use of the term 'Bild' to encapsulate Emilia's view of the city. In a gesture reminiscent of Scheinowiz's insistence that no traces of Café Prückel's original interior are visible in its new *décor*, the reduction of the cityscape to the status of an image negates *a priori* the sense of historical depth created by the confluence of historical moments of which the view itself is comprised. The signifying function of the small-scale monuments that are present in the cityscape is negated in a similar manner. Early in the novel, for example, the reader learns that during her strolls through the city, Dora 'schaut fast jedes Mal

⁵⁴ Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, MA; London: MIT Press, 1989), p. 100.

⁵⁵ Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 7 vols., ed. by Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1972-89), V: *Das Passagenwerk*, ed. by Rolf Tiedemann (1982), p. 570.

⁵⁶ Certeau, *Practice*, p. 91.

auf die Markierung, die an das Hochwasser in der Nacht vom 28. Februar auf den 1. März erinnert' (*Musik*, p. 25). During the same walk, having reached the *Augarten*, Dora registers a more understated form of Certeau's 'erotics of knowledge'—which manifests itself in the appreciation of 'eine ganz leichte Bewegung, eine freie und befreiende Geste' (*Musik*, p. 27)—while taking in the view over the Second District:

[...] die Jahrhunderte sind gleichzeitig da, unter ihrem Blick zerstreut, die Zeit des Schaetzers, die Zeit des Hochwassers und der kleinen Erzählung, in der für sie das Hochwasser zu einem Ereignis wird, ihre und meine Zeit, das Danach (*Musik*, p. 27).

Significant in the foregoing quotation is the oblique reference to Franz Grillparzer's short story *Der arme Spielmann*,⁵⁷ which itself documents the devastation caused by the *Hochwasser* that is commemorated by the 'Markierung' to which Dora refers. Dora's suggestion that the *Hochwasser* is realised as an event only when it is mediated through Grillparzer's novella points up the limited signifying power that can be attributed legitimately to the city's attempts to commemorate its own history. At the same time, the use here of the adverb 'gleichzeitig' fulfils a function similar to the narrator's use of the term 'Bild' in the foregoing quotation. The fact that Dora is able to view a multitude of histories 'simultaneously' perforce evacuates from the city any sense of historical depth.

A similarly complex and contradictory approach to Vienna's multiple pasts becomes evident in the protagonists' reactions to the elements of the cityscape that they encounter from the second of Certeau's two perspectives, the view of the city 'on ground level'.⁵⁸ During the first account of an urban stroll that surfaces in the novel's *recit*, Dora traverses the *Innere Stadt* in order to attend the *Abschlussprüfung* for her doctorate. Her stroll along the *Wollzeile* is narrated as follows:

Sie geht ein Stückchen durch die Wollzeile [...] während die Fassaden der Häuser darüber (bevor, viel zu schnell, der Glanz verloren geht) ihr klar und deutlich erscheinen wie kaum jemals davor, jede in ihrer aufs Jahrhundert ihrer Errichtung verweisenden besonderen Charakteristik, die nur noch ganz dünn oder gar nicht mit der Funktion des Gebäudes, seinem Innenleben, den

⁵⁷ Franz Grillparzer, *Der arme Spielmann* (Dittingen: Reclam, 1986).

⁵⁸ Certeau, *Practice*, p. 97.

Menschen, die sich in ihm befinden und durch es hindurchgehen, verbunden ist.
(*Musik*, p. 32)

Dora's perception of the buildings that she passes simultaneously inaugurates and complicates the opposition between surface and depth—here 'Fassade' and 'Innenleben'—that I discussed in my assessment of *Suche nach M.* But while Rabinovici's treatment of history involves the 'covering over' of the past with a more contemporary façade, the relationship between the past and present that is presented in *Ihre Musik* is constructed differently. Dora's musings attest at once to a slippage between surface and depth, interior and exterior, and past and present. The exteriors of each building act as signifiers of a specific historical past that their interiors and their inhabitants no longer sustain. As a result, rather than revitalizing or supporting the memory of a specific past, the exterior characteristics that betray the century in which each building was constructed attest to the decay of the socio-cultural context of which the buildings themselves were a product. The buildings thus emerge as relics, in the sense that they constitute 'symbolic forms that have persisted beyond the form of life that gave [them] human vitality'.⁵⁹ Significantly, though, even this negated signifying power is shown to be dependent on the perception of the subject. At a later juncture, Dora qualifies her original statement, thereby stripping from the buildings that make up the cityscape of any sense of depth or of history: 'die Fassaden', she maintains 'sind nichts als Fassaden' (*Musik*, p. 35).

The treatment of history in Stangl's Vienna is, therefore, at once more intricate and more pessimistic than the detailed references the small-scale 'monuments' that commemorate the city's multiple pasts might initially suggest. In Stangl's Vienna, manifestations of history have congealed into a two-dimensional present, capable of attesting only to the decay and disappearance of the multiple pasts that produced them. The architecture that dominates the city, furthermore, is indicative not of progression but of repetition; modified versions of the same 'symbolic forms' combine on the city's skyline. These circumstances map neatly onto the concept of *Naturgeschichte*, which provides a key theoretical framework for the *Passagenwerk* material, but finds its most extensive articulation in Benjamin's earlier work, *Der Ursprung des deutschen*

⁵⁹ Santner, *On Creaturely Life*, p. 22.

Trauerspiels.⁶⁰ Max Pensky argues that in the 'dialectic of natural history', history becomes '[p]etrified, transformed into the spectre of repetition' and is thus 'transfigured into dead nature'.⁶¹ Pensky's observations are echoed by Susan Buck-Morss, who substitutes references to 'dead nature' with the concept of 'discarded fetishes'. For Buck-Morss, *Naturgeschichte* is encapsulated most effectively by the fossil, which, she suggests, 'captures [...] the process of natural decay that marks the survival of past history within the present, expressing with palpable clarity what the discarded fetish becomes, so hollowed out of life that only the imprint of the material shell remains'.⁶² On this reading, the external features of the architecture in Stangl's Vienna function as a set of 'discarded fetishes' that are petrified beneath the gaze of the subject. In referring to, but not revitalizing, the historical pasts in which they originated, to borrow Buck-Morss's formulation, these monuments which 'were built to signify the immortality of civilization become[] proof, rather, of its transiency'.⁶³

The pervasive sense of two-dimensionality and the dynamic of repetition that underpin Stangl's cityscape, however, acquire a resonance in *Ihre Musik* that transcends the representation of history. The interaction between these two central features of Stangl's Vienna constitutes the guiding principle for the biographies of the novel's main protagonists, thereby providing a significant connection between subject and city. As well as reflecting the labyrinthine nature of the city, for example, the repeated formulations that the reader encounters frequently in the narrative discourse of *Ihre Musik* are indicative of the repetitive nature of the protagonists' lives. Emilia and Dora's parallel existences '(in zwei übereinander gelgenen Wohnungen, in Folien von Wohnungen [...])' (*Musik*, p. 106) take place '([...] in Schleifen der Wiederholung gefangene Jahre)' (*Musik*, p. 14). Walks consistently take in the same locations; days are taken up with the same activities. Once more, the staid and stultifying nature of the protagonists' lifestyles is conveyed through repeated recourse to the metaphor of the 'Bild'. On multiple occasions throughout the novel, the

⁶⁰ Walter Benjamin, 'Der Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels', in Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften, I: Abhandlungen* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1977).

⁶¹ Max Pensky, *Melancholy Dialectics: Walter Benjamin and the Play of Mourning* (Boston, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001) p. 89.

⁶² Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing*, p. 160.

⁶³ *Ibid.* p. 170.

protagonists express a wish to walk 'tiefer [...] ins Bild, in den Untergrund des Bildes, damit hinaus aus dem zweidimensionalen Raum, wo sich das Leben der Menschen (aus manchen Perspektiven ihr Leben) abspielt, abgespielt hat, das bißchen Wirklichkeit' (*Musik*, p. 12, 46). Once more, past and present are seen here to be captured in the same two-dimensional 'Wirklichkeit'. In Dora's case particularly, references to reality as a two-dimensional image are complemented with a similar metaphor, provided this time by the pattern on her bedroom curtains:

Sie kann das Tapetenmuster wieder sehen, das sie als Kind im Bett liegend betrachtet hat, Schlinge für Schlinge, und kann wie als Kind mit dem Finger oder im Kopf Linien nachziehen und Ebene um Ebene tiefer ins Muster hineintauchen (hinaus aus dem zweidimensionalen Raum, wo sich das Leben der Menschen, aus manchen Perspektiven auch ihr Leben) abspielt, kann nach Belieben hindundherwechseln zwischen den Ebenen und wieder hervorsteigen [...]. (*Musik*, pp. 46, 176)

The sense of agency that Dora apparently derives from her ability to traverse—'nach Belieben'—the layers of the 'Muster' is instructive with regard to the restrictions that are placed upon her by the repetitive nature of her lifestyle in the Vienna of *Ihre Musik*. Attempts to escape the two-dimensional reality that life in the city constitutes, to vanish 'in den Untergrund des Bildes' provide access only to another layer of the same 'pattern'. In the image of the 'Muster', therefore, the dynamics of repetition and two-dimensionality are combined, so that the metaphor itself becomes a valid reflection both of the city and of the biographies of the subjects that appropriate it. Yet it is in precisely this act of appropriation, which, in *Ihre Musik*, takes the form of the urban stroll, that the protagonists are able to test, and sometimes to traverse, the boundaries that the city sets for them. In what follows, I show that the urban stroll fulfils three separate but interlinked functions in *Ihre Musik*, each of which allows the protagonists—superficially at least—to maintain a degree of individual agency during their traversal of the city. By bringing to bear on the cityscape the unique combination of body and biography, the protagonists are able first to re-animate the collection of empty signifiers that constitutes the urban environment. By mapping onto these relics their own memories, experiences and interpretations, both Dora and Emilia provide subjective 'keys' to their meaning, thereby creating their own, subjective 'versions' of the city itself.

Second, the act of urban walking allows Emilia and Dora to successfully deflect—or, better, appropriate—the ‘shocks’ that are endemic in the urban environment. Third, urban walking emerges in *Ihre Musik* as a means by which the protagonists are able to circumvent the nefarious influence of disciplinary power that proceeds from the two key institutions that feature in the novel, namely the university and the hospital.

REANIMATING THE CITY

The creation of individualized ‘migrational’ cities in the ‘clear text’ of Stangl’s Vienna is achieved through two distinct but related processes.⁶⁴ The first is analogous to the one that Certeau outlines in his essay on urban walking. As this element of Certeau’s work has been detailed in earlier chapters, it is necessary here to provide only a brief gloss on the salient points. Certeau maintains that the urban walker is able to retain the agency that is denied him in the rationalized space of the disciplined cityscape by assigning to its individual elements subjective, discrete meanings that proceed primarily from his own experiences, memories and accumulated knowledge. The form of re-imagining that causes this situation to emerge in *Ihre Musik* is the protagonists’ ‘creative reanimation’ of their surroundings. Throughout the novel, the protagonists imaginatively transfigure relationships between bodies and space, between fictional and ‘real’ spaces, and between the different objects that populate both their internal and external surroundings. This section examines in turn the mechanics and implications of both strategies in an effort to isolate the ways in which the protagonists attempt to create their own space within the Vienna of the novel.

Perhaps the most conventional method that the protagonists employ in order to re-animate the urban landscape is the interpolation into it of their own experiences and memories. The clearest example is provided by Emilia’s repeated reminiscences about her school days, which are usually triggered when she passes the gateway that leads to her old school-building, identifiable, by its gate, which is adorned with stone lions’ heads. But as Emilia’s reaction to

⁶⁴ Certeau, *Practice*, p. 93.

passing the building suggests, the interpolation of childhood memories into the urban landscape is not by any means as banal as it may seem at first glance:

Das Tor mit den Löwenköpfen ist verschlossen, die Fassaden der Schule und des Hauses zum kleinen Hirschen liegen im Schatten, kein Licht hinter den Fenstern; sie spürt den Lufthauch, die Schritte hinter sich, dreht sich nicht um, hört Sätze, die keine Antwort und keine Rechtfertigung von ihr verlangen, erkennt die Stimmen. Jemand geht an ihre Stelle die letzten paar Schritte bis zum Haustor). [...] Die Frau an ihrer Stelle wird jetzt begleitet [...] Auch ihre Begleiter sind Stellvertreter, zugleich sind sie doch auch sie selbst, mehr als sie es je gewesen sind, junge Männer und Mädchen [...]. ([S]ie oder die Frau an ihrer Stelle lehnt sich im Gehen beinahe zurück [...]. [D]ie Wärme von Gedanken, von Worten, die Wärme der Logik in Sätzen und Büchern, in den Sätzen eines alten Lehrers ist kaum weniger spürbar. (*Musik*, p. 144)

In order to unravel the complexities of Emilia's reaction here, we need to examine briefly Benjamin's observations on the best-known, and simultaneously the most supple, of his conceptual categories, that of 'Aura'. Although the concept is articulated initially in Benjamin's seminal essay 'Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit',⁶⁵ the qualities of 'Aura' that are most useful for our purposes are outlined in the essay on Baudelaire. Here, Benjamin defines 'Aura' as follows:

Die Erfahrung der Aura beruht [...] auf der Übertragung einer in der menschlichen Gesellschaft geläufigen Reaktionsform auf das Verhältnis des Unbelebten oder der Natur zum Menschen. Der Angesehene oder angesehen sich Glaubende schlägt den Blick auf. Die Aura einer Erscheinung erfahren heißt, sie mit dem Vermögen belehnen, den Blick aufzuschlagen [...].⁶⁶

This definition identifies aura as the result of an intersubjective experience based on the capacity of the object to return, or more accurately to mirror, the human gaze. As Miriam Hansen notes, Benjamin 'attributes the agency of the auratic gaze to the object being looked at, thereby echoing [...] speculation [...] that the ability to return the gaze is already dormant in, if not constitutive of, the object'.⁶⁷ But the emergence of auratic experience, as she contends later, also depends on the subject's ability to actualize this potential:

The perceiving subject engages in a form of *Belehnung* or endowment of the natural object with 'the ability to look back at us'. The aura is a medium that envelops and physically connects—and thus blurs the boundaries between—subject and object, suggesting a sensory, embodied mode of perception. [...] This mode of perception involves surrender to the object as other. The auratic

⁶⁵ Walter Benjamin, 'Über einige Motive bei Baudelaire', in *Gesammelte Schriften*, IV: *Kleine Prosa. Baudelaire-Übertragungen*, ed. by Tillman Rexroth (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1974)

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Miriam Bratu Hansen, 'Benjamin's Aura', *Critical Inquiry*, 34 (2008), 336-75 (p. 343).

quality that manifests itself in the object—‘the unique appearance of a distance, however near it may be’—cannot be produced at will; it appears *to* the subject, not *for* it.⁶⁸

The conditions under which such an ‘appearance’ is likely to take place are made clearer when Benjamin’s allusion to Proust’s *mémoire involontaire* is taken into account. Auratic experience is manifest in the triggering of an ‘embodied memory that “can only be achieved through actualization, not reflection”’.⁶⁹ Thus, the ‘distance’ to which Benjamin’s early conception of the aura in the Artwork essay is revealed to be ‘[...] of a temporal dimension, marking the fleeting moment in which the trace of an unconscious “prehistoric” past is actualized in a cognitive image’.⁷⁰ Thus understood, auratic experience facilitates fleeting access to a form of natural ‘ur-past’, a subconscious image of the self never experienced as such in a waking state. Hence, the ‘Aura’ is defined by a ‘disjunctive temporality—a sudden and fleeting disruption of linear time’, and ‘the concomitant dislocation of the subject’.⁷¹

The key hallmarks of auratic experience coalesce in Emilia’s unconventional reaction to the sight of her old school building. It is worth noting that the recurring image of the ‘Löwenköpfe’ is one of the few manifestations of the natural that does not intrinsically connect nature—and therefore, in Benjaminian terms, the course of human history—with death, decay and catastrophe. These images of the natural, which are inscribed into the urban landscape, thus take on functions reminiscent of the *Wunschbild*. As we saw in Chapter Three, Benjamin maintained that certain commodities reified a desire for a utopian future by adopting an outward appearance commensurate with an element of a mythic, utopian *Ur-past*. The resurrection of this ‘mythic past’ also occurs in the context of the inter-subjective interaction that is at the heart of the auratic experience, and can be detected in Emilia’s reaction to the sight of the *Löwenköpfe*. Passing by the gates, Emilia experiences a sense of ‘disjunctive temporality’. Rather than merely remembering her fellow pupils, and the ‘warmth’ that she associated with the ‘logic’ of books, sentences and her

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p. 351.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

⁷⁰ Miriam Hansen, ‘Benjamin, Cinema and Experience: “The Blue Flower in the Land of Technology”’, *New German Critique*, 40 (1987), 179-224, (p. 188).

⁷¹ Hansen, ‘Benjamin’s Aura’, p. 347.

teacher, she is accompanied momentarily by the subject who experienced this past first-hand. Yet, in accordance with Hanssen's reading, the past that Emilia's 'Begleiter' re-enacts involves the actualization of '[an] [...] image of the self never experienced as such in a waking state'. Emilia observes that the 'past selves' who are accompanying her are 'sie selbst, mehr als sie es je gewesen sind' (*Musik*, p. 144).

Several significant points arise from the narration of Emilia's experience. It suggests, first, that the representation of Vienna in *Ihre Musik* is by no means as monolithic—or as universally pessimistic—as my foregoing observations might imply. The unconventional reaction that the sight of the *Löwenköpfe* provokes in Emilia suggests that certain elements of the cityscape have the potential to be complicit in the protagonists' attempts to transcend the superficiality of present-day Vienna. Yet Emilia's reaction also suggests that this potential cannot be actualized autonomously by subject or city individually. The capacity of the object to 'look back' at the subject—and thereby facilitate the resuscitation of a forgotten past—must be 'unlocked' or activated by the subject. At the same time, though, the protagonists themselves are unable to intentionally actualize this potential at will, because, as Hanssen notes, "the unique appearance of a distance, however close it may be" [...] appears to the subject, not for it'.⁷²

The suggestion that the signifying potential of Vienna's cityscape has to be 'unlocked' by the protagonists is reinforced by the role that books play in this endeavour. In order to explore this fully, we need first to review briefly Certeau's observations on the role of proper names. It will be remembered that, for Certeau, proper names—primarily in the form of street-signs—constitute a site of spatialization with which the subject is able to invest contingent meaning. In *Ihre Musik*, however, this process is rendered somewhat more complex, a circumstance that has been hinted at already in Dora's response to the plaque that commemorates the *Hochwasser* of 1839. As we saw in the previous section, this event could be realized only through recourse to Franz Grillparzer's *Der arme Spielmann*. Similarly, Dora's ability to invest the city streets with meaning

⁷²Ibid, p. 339.

is shown to be contingent on her knowledge of literature, which facilitates a form of communication with the authors who lend them their names. More significant, though, is the fact that the process of reading—and the presence of books—is held up explicitly as a means by which Dora is able to transcend the mortified surface appearance of present-day Vienna and traverse different layers of history:

Sie kann mit dem toten Autor, nach dem nun eine Straße zwischen Universität und Rathaus benannt ist [...] sprechen. Sie genießt ihre Freiheit zu sprechen und sich im Sprechen zwischen den Zeiten, zwischen sich selbst und der anderen Person, zu bewegen (die Orte und die Bücher sind da, sonst ginge es nicht). (*Musik*, p. 52)

While Dora does not name the author with whom she communicates during her wanderings through the first district, a brief glance at a city-map suggests that the street to which she refers might reasonably be *Grillparzerstraße*, which runs between the *Rathauspark* and the newly-christened *Universitätsring*. This suspicion that is supported by the fact that extracts from *Der arme Spielmann* are interpolated into the text as the narration of Dora's walk continues. These intertextual references are significant for two reasons. First, they constitute a literalized manifestation of the 'metaphorical cities' that Certeau notes can 'slip[] into the clear text of the planned or readable city' that allows the subject to appropriate the urban system.⁷³ More significantly, though, they point out another function that reading fulfils in the protagonists' attempts to 'reanimate' the urban landscape. Books provide access to alternate 'Sprach- und Denkwelten' that extend the protagonists' frame of reference, enabling them to interpolate the characteristics of bygone cities into their own urban experience. In other words, the protagonists compensate for the lack of historical depth in the Viennese landscape by creating it autonomously.

Yet books are not the only medium that facilitates the imaginative reanimation of the cityscape. For our purposes, one of the most significant means of interpolating subjective meaning into the urban landscape involves the re-imagination of the relationship between body and city. A clear example of this occurs on the multiple occasions on which both protagonists run their knuckles along a painted wall.

⁷³ Certeau, *Practice*, p. 98.

Sie schleift mit den Fingerknöcheln am Verputz der Hausmauern [...] sie stellt sich vor, wie Sand und Farbrete in die Wunden sickern [...] der Sand und die Farbrete verteilen sich in ihrem Blut, sie sieht, wie sich die Kellerräume unter ihren Füßen [...] weit verzweigen und in geheimen Kammern und Gängen über die Grenzen des Gebäudes und vielleicht des Bezirks hinaus fortgraben, ein neues Jahrzehnt, ein neues Zeitalter haben begonnen, halb geht sie unter der Erde. (*Musik*, p. 88)

Significant in the foregoing quotation is the simultaneous ‘re-imagination’ of body and city that the focalizing protagonist—on this occasion probably Emilia—undertakes. The cityscape is transformed here from a desolate marketplace littered with the debris of consumption into an *Urlandschaft* composed of catacombs that concretizes the representation of the city as labyrinth. At the same time, the relationship between body and city is also imaginatively reconfigured: the border between the two entities is lifted so that they enter into an improbable constellation; the fabric of the city is allowed to invade the body so that the two momentarily coalesce. This imaginative reconfiguration of relationships between phenomena is a staple of Stangl’s text, and it is worth noting that it is not merely restricted to the relationship between the body and the city. In *Ihre Musik*, typewriters acquire bodies; fingers become ‘Wohnräume’ that are inhabited by ‘zerbrochene Wesen’; buildings are constructed out of thoughts. The reanimation of the city, then, involves numerous facets of subjectivity: imagination, experience, and biography; it is predicated, though, on the walking body’s ability to dominate and to manipulate the cityscape. It is through the act of urban walking that the protagonists create from the fragments of the urban landscape their own subjective, but nevertheless, identifiable, whole. Yet urban walking also facilitates a very different form of interaction with the fragmentary cityscape. As we will see in the next section, urban walking also permits the deflection of—and interaction with—the myriad fragmentary impulses with which the city necessarily assails the body.

WALKING THE CITY: BETWEEN DEFLECTION AND INTEGRATION

As Susan Buck-Morss notes, Walter Benjamin's theory of modern subjectivity is neurological in nature.⁷⁴ It draws primarily on the theorization of memory in Bergson and Freud, and its representation in Proust and Valéry. Benjamin's key observation is based on the conception of memory's relationship to consciousness that Freud lays out in 'Jenseits des Lustprinzips'. Freud contends here that a key function of consciousness is as a 'Reizschutz', 'vor allem bestrebt [...] die besonderen Formen der Energieumsetzung, die in ihm spielen, vor dem gleichmachenden, also zerstörenden Einfluß der übergroßen, draußen arbeitenden Energien zu bewahren'.⁷⁵ The consciousness performs this function by registering external stimuli, thereby preventing them from congealing into memory. Benjamin notes, '[...] je größer der Anteil des Chockmoments an den einzelnen Eindrücken ist, je unablässiger das Bewußtsein im Interesse des Reizschutzes auf dem Plan sein muß, je größer der Erfolg ist, mit dem es operiert, desto weniger gehen sie in die Erfahrung ein [...]'.⁷⁶ But for Benjamin, the experience of the modern city is one in which 'das Chockerlebnis zur Norm geworden ist'.⁷⁷ Thus, the 'Zeit zur Organisierung der Aufnahmen', which Valéry believes is provided by memory, is no longer available. As Buck-Morss notes, '[t]he problem is that under the conditions of modern shock—the daily shocks of the modern world—response to stimuli without thinking has become necessary for survival'.⁷⁸ Thus, "'being cheated out of experience" [*Erfahrung*] has become the general state [...]'.⁷⁹

Benjamin establishes a number of prototypically modern phenomena as paradigmatic sites of the shock experience, all of which are relevant for a reading of *Ihre Musik*. The first is the urban crowd, which Baudelaire describes

⁷⁴ Susan Buck-Morss, 'Aesthetics and Anaesthetics: Walter Benjamin's Artwork Essay Reconsidered', *October*, 62 (1992), 3-41, (p. 16).

⁷⁵ Cf. Sigmund Freud, 'Jenseits des Lustprinzips', in *Studienausgabe*, 11 vols, ed. by Alexander Mitscherlich, Angela Richards and James Strachey, (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer, 1969-1975 III: *Psychologie des Unbewußten* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1989), pp. 213-72.

⁷⁶ Walter Benjamin, 'Charles Baudelaire. Ein Lyriker im Zeitalter des Hochkapitalismus', in *Gesammelte Schriften*, 7 vols. ed. by Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1972-89), I: *Abhandlungen*, ed. by Tiedemann and Schweppenhäuser (1972), pp. 237-303 (p. 238).

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ Buck-Morss, 'Aesthetics and Anaesthetics', p. 16.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

as the ‘amorphe Menge der Passanten’.⁸⁰ The subject’s encounter with the crowd, Benjamin maintains, ‘bedingt [...] eine Folge von Chocks und von Kollisionen. An den gefährlichen Kreuzungspunkten durchzucken ihn [...] Innervationen in rascher Folge’.⁸¹ The second is the newly-developed medium of film, which establishes ‘die chockförmige Wahrnehmung als formales Prinzip’.⁸² Benjamin also draws a parallel between the ‘Chockerlebnis’ and the experience of the factory worker at the conveyor belt,⁸³ which he subsequently concretizes, stating that ‘Dem Chockerlebnis, das der Passant in der Menge hat, entspricht das “Erlebnis” des Arbeiters an der Maschinerie’.⁸⁴ In terms of understanding the dynamics of the ‘Chockerlebnis’, this is probably the most productive equivalence that Benjamin identifies. Drawing on Marx, he describes the experience of the worker as a form of dressage, whereby ‘die Arbeiter [lernen], “ihre Bewegung der gleichförmig stetigen Bewegung eines Automaten” zu koordinieren’.⁸⁵ Benjamin notes subsequently that ‘[d]er Handgriff des Arbeiters an der Maschine ist gerade dadurch mit dem vorhergehenden ohne Zusammenhang, daß er dessen strikte Wiederholung darstellt’,⁸⁶ thereby attributing to the ‘Chockerlebnis’ the qualities of fragmentation and repetition.

The dominance of the shock-experience is announced at the very beginning of Stangl’s novel, in the narration of Dora’s (ultimately abortive) walk from Leopoldstadt to the University. Part of her journey through the urban crowd is narrated as follows:

Jetzt kann sie so genau beobachten, daß ihr kein Detail entgeht: der Blick des abbremsenden Taxifahrers, den sie beim Überqueren der Straße auffängt, seine goldene Brilleneinfassung, die Falten seines Hemdes (lebt er noch) die starrgliedrigen Schaufensterpuppen in Spitzenunterwäsche und die grünliche streng dreinschauende Statue im langen Mantel mit dem langen verfilzten schwarzgrünen Metallbart, die rote über den Pizzateig geschmierte Tomatensauce, die behaarten Arme und der weiße Kittel des Pizzabäckers im offenen Fenster (sie biegt in die Wollzeile), davor noch die Jeansjacke des in ihren Freund untergehängten japanischen Mädchens, die an den Ärmeln ihrer Jacke streift, ein winziges Knistern im Strömungsmuster, das Passanten,

⁸⁰ Benjamin, ‘Baudelaire’, p. 618.

⁸¹ *ibid.*, p. 630.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 631.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 618.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 631. Benjamin quotes here from Karl Marx, *Das Kapital: Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*, 2 vols, unabridged edn, ed. by Karl Korsch (Berlin: Ullstein, 1979).

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 633.

Einkäufer, Spaziergänger, Geschäftsleute und Touristen [...] bilden. (*Musik*, p. 19)

The foregoing extract corresponds on a number of counts with Benjamin's account of the shock-experience. The narrator's recourse to imagery of electrical current in his description of the urban crowd as a 'Strömungsmuster' articulates with Baudelaire's suggestion that the crowd constitutes a reservoir of electrical energy. The effects of this 'energy' become clear on examining in detail the way in which Dora perceives the pedestrians and the elements of the cityscape that she encounters. On initial observation, the narrative dynamics of the foregoing passage appear to mimic convincingly the constantly-shifting view of the cityscape that presents itself to the urban walker. The details that Dora observes are presented in list form, integrated into an improbably long sentence that accentuates the flow of the narrative, thereby suggesting initially the seamless transition of the gaze from one element of the cityscape to the next. But on closer observation, the particular details that Dora picks out work against this assessment. Rather than describing in full the pedestrians and elements of the cityscape that she encounters, Dora focuses on minute and inconsequential details, generating a description whose narrative dynamics recall in combination the filmic techniques of zoom and jump-shot. Dora's focus on individual minutiae (the frames of a passer-by's glasses, the wrinkles in a shirt, the sleeve of a jacket), together with the brevity of the individual descriptions, renders her narrative discontinuous, because the reader is given no information as to the location of each element relative to the last. Dora's narration thus necessarily leaves blank spaces in the cityscape, so that its elements are abstracted from one another. In combination, these characteristics of Dora's description allow it to correspond both formally and thematically to the dynamics of the shock experience that Benjamin lays out.

A conspicuous characteristic of Dora's narrative, however, is her constant juxtaposition of the 'electrical impulses' that are responsible for shock experiences with other sensations and rhythms more closely connected with her own body, and specifically with the activity of walking itself. Relating the event that necessitated her walk into town, the narrator notes:

([...] sie [...] findet es lustig, daß die Straßenbahn ihr knapp davon fährt, gerade an diesem Tag: die Wärme dieser Drehung, die Wärme in den Nackenmuskeln,

die Wärme und das leise Kribbeln in den Schenkeln, das Ziehen in den Waden und Hüften beim Gehen, das sie erst jetzt spürt, für jeden einzelnen Moment der Bewegung im Inneren ihres Körpers, keine Widerspiegelung, etwas erregend Neues. (*Musik*, pp. 15-16)

The corporeal sensations that Dora refers to are constituted in the foregoing quotation as a counterpoint to the external stimuli of the urban environment. In stark contrast to the repetitious nature of the shock-experience that Benjamin insists upon, the 'innere Eindrücke' to which Dora refers are figured explicitly as unique to 'jeder einzelne Moment der Bewegung'. The emancipatory potential of these internal rhythms increases in light of the ways in which Baudelaire sought to counteract the effects of the shock experience. Drawing on Baudelaire, Benjamin endows the subject with the capacity to disrupt the effects of the shock-experience, suggesting that he is able 'die Chocks mit seiner geistigen und physischen Person zu parieren'.⁸⁷ For Benjamin, it is the lyric *oeuvre* of Charles Baudelaire that affords the greatest insight into the mechanics of this 'phantastisches Gefecht', one that he sees as bound up intimately with the figure of the *flâneur*. The evidence that Benjamin provides for this contention suggests the existence of additional counteractive strategies that sit more neatly with the emphasis on the 'inner life' of the subject that is visible in Stangl's narrative. Baudelaire maintains:

Wer von uns hätte nicht schon in den Tagen des Ehrgeizes das Wunderwerk einer poetischen Prosa erträumt? Sie müßte musikalisch ohne Rhythmus und Reim sein, sie müßte geschmeidig und spröde genug sein, um sich den lyrischen Regungen der Seele, den Wellenbewegungen der Träumerei, den Chocks des Bewußtseins anzupassen. Dieses Ideal, das zur fixen Idee werden kann, wird vor allem von dem Besitz ergreifen, der in den Riesenstädten mit dem Geflecht ihrer zahllosen einander durchkreuzenden Beziehungen zuhause ist.⁸⁸

The foregoing quotation suggests a need to review Benjamin's description of Baudelaire's poetry as an attempt to parry the effects of the shock experience. Baudelaire's observations here suggest that he viewed the 'Chockerlebnis' as an accepted element of the matrix of impulses that determine the dynamics of urban subjectivity. Rather than demanding a method of counteracting the shocks that are inflicted on the subject by the urban environment, the foregoing quotation is in fact interpreted more readily as an appeal for a prose-style capable of harmonizing the 'Reize', both internal and external, to which the

⁸⁷ Benjamin, 'Baudelaire', p. 613.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 618.

urban inhabitant is subject. On this reading, the subject can deal with the shocks that arise from the 'zahllose einander durchkreuzende Beziehungen' of the urban environment by adopting a specific mode of interaction with them. Rather than seeking to counteract them, the urban subject can attune to them the impulses produced by the facets of its 'geistige und physische Person'.

It is against this background that one of the most opaque aspects of Stangl's novel can readily be interpreted. A number of critics have questioned the relevance to the events of the novel of the 'Musik' to which its title refers, but no sustained attempt has yet been made to determine what this relevance might be. Examination of those passages in which music plays a role, however, reveals certain parallels with my own interpretation of Baudelaire's observations. In the earlier sections of the novel particularly, both protagonists attempt frequently to adapt to the rhythm and melody of any music with which they are confronted. On these occasions, music emerges as a force that facilitates and strengthens the connection between body, mind, space and time. Significantly, the combination of music, thought and movement—in Baudelaire's parlance, elements of the subject's 'geistige und physische Person'—combine to form a sense of uniqueness and particularity that allows the protagonists to 'lay claim' to the moment in which the music plays:

[...] eine leise Musik spielt. Sie versucht, in den Rhythmus, in die Melodie zu fallen, so dass sie sich fest mit ihren Bewegungen und mit ihrem Denken verbinden, den Tag bestimmen, für sie allein, wen auch immer sie treffen wird, wer auch immer ihr zusieht oder sie ansieht. (*Musik*, p. 41).⁸⁹

The degree to which the three elements of the 'system' created by the combination of music, body and mind are interlinked becomes clear on examining the changes that occur in the representation of music as the onset of Dora's symptoms progresses. In the later sections of the novel, the character of the music that Dora hears alters, and she finds herself unable to adapt to any of the music that is playing in her vicinity. The harmonious 'Melodienbögen' of earlier sections are replaced by 'eine dumpfe Musik' that consists of 'in sich gedrehte Klänge' (*Musik*, p. 180), and which merely 'sich auf [...] [Doras] Körper

⁸⁹ Cf. also *Musik*, p. 41 'Ihre Atemzüge bestimmen den Gang ihres Denkens in ihrem Kopf, begleiten und bestärken die Rhythmen und Melodienbögen aus dem Radio. Der Klang lässt die Zeit vergehen und hält sie zugleich fest, gibt ihr Substanz, macht den Tag [...] zu einem Tag in ihrem Leben; ein für immer besetzter Punkt der Zeit'.

einwirkt' (*Musik*, p. 180). Read against the background of Baudelaire's observations on the need for a 'musical' prose-style that might attune itself to the 'lyrischen Regungen der Seele, den Wellenbewegungen der Träumerei, den Chocks des Bewußtseins', the changes in the role and character of music in Stangl's novel suggest that its title in fact gets to the very heart of the issue with which this thesis is concerned. The *Musik* to which the novel's title refers may be taken as a cipher for Stangl's interpretation of the relationship between body and city. Music apparently permits the subject to create a specific, particularized 'embodied experience' of its surroundings. In other words, music in Stangl's novel becomes an integral part of the system that, for phenomenologists including Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Iris Marion Young, governs the subject's interaction with her own space. Because it seems to underpin the subject's embodied experience of the city, therefore, the 'Musik' to which the title refers not only implies a possible method of dealing with the internal and external 'shocks' to which urban inhabitants are necessarily subjected. It also counteracts the universalizing tendencies of disciplinarity by privileging the particularity of embodiment over the isomorphism of the—specifically Foucauldian—body. The role of music in *Ihre Musik* therefore overlaps with the third function of walking to be explored in this chapter, which I schematize under the heading 'circumvention'.

WALKING THE CITY: CIRCUMVENTION

The final function that walking fulfils in *Ihre Musik* is one that is already familiar. Drawing on the work of Michel de Certeau, my reading of *Wiener Passion* explores the subversive, anti-disciplinary potential of walking which, however, is not realised in Faschinger's novel because the disciplinary mechanisms that structure her version of *fin-de-siècle* Vienna have evolved to take account of the 'noise of difference' that the embodied practice of urban walking entails. Not so in *Ihre Musik*, by contrast, where walking emerges as an effective subversive strategy that permits Stangl's protagonists to evade and to counteract the influence of the disciplinary power that emanates from the institutions with which they are allied. But *Ihre Musik* does not merely provide a counterpoint to

Faschinger's exploration of urban walking. The post-Foucauldian elements of Stangl's approach are combined once more with the exploration of key *topoi* that provided the conceptual armature for the *Passagenwerk*. Chief among these, once more, is the urban crowd, which provides both Emilia and Dora with a space of anonymous protection on the one hand, and on the other with a source of mastery over the urban terrain. Given the complex combination of insights that underpin Stangl's representation of urban walking as a subversive strategy, this section provides two discrete but interlinked readings that home in separately on its resonances in the work of Benjamin and Foucault.

I have examined already one of the key elements of the protagonists' engagement with the urban crowd, namely their attempts not only to parry, but also to integrate with, the shock-like impulses that an encounter with it produces. But another aspect that is worthy of attention here is the apparently innate capacity that both Dora and Emilia display to categorize the members of the crowds with which they come into contact. Dora is able to identify among their number 'Passanten, Einkäufer, Spaziergänger, Geschäftsleute und Touristen' (*Musik*, p. 19), while Emilia, reminiscing about the view from her classroom window, remembers an urban crowd that she traversed 'unter den Gesichtern der Entgegenkommenden, Arbeiter, die gleich als Arbeiter zu erkennen sind [...] der Verkäuferin, Friseurin, Apothekerin, des Trafikanten, eines Polizisten (ausgerechnet eines Polizisten) [...]' (*Musik*, p. 20). In order to appreciate the significance of the protagonists' ability to categorize members of the crowd, we need to return briefly to the account of the *flâneur* in the first draft of Benjamin's unfinished Baudelaire book, 'Das Paris des Second Empire bei Baudelaire'. The account of the *flâneur* that Benjamin provides here links him to the *Physiologien*, a trivial literary genre that sought to respond to what Benjamin saw as one of modernity's major hallmarks, namely the sense of disquiet produced by the urban subject's compulsory encounters with the crowd. The solution that the *Physiologien* supplied was one of rationalization. By presenting the urban population with sketches of the character-types that constituted the crowd, they created a 'phantasmagoria of transparency' that

circumvented the crowd's threatening anonymity.⁹⁰ As Benjamin notes, the *Physiologien* assured their readership that 'jedermann [imstande sei] [...] Beruf, Charakter, Herkunft und Lebensweise der Passanten abzulesen'.⁹¹ A key element of this strategy was the naiveté inherent in the character-sketches that the *Physiologien* provided. Benjamin characterizes the genre's myriad 'Charakterköpfe' as 'harmlos' and united by a 'vollendete[] Bonhomie'.⁹²

The *Physiologien* are relevant for our purposes because of the parallel that Benjamin establishes between their character and the activity of the *flâneur*. Benjamin notes that '[d]ie Gemächlichkeit dieser Schildereien paßt zu dem Habitus des flaneurs, der auf dem Asphalt botanisieren geht'.⁹³ This turn of phrase, more often quoted than analysed, has implications for the *flâneur's* relationship with the crowd and with the city. Benjamin's recourse to nature imagery links the essay to his childhood writings by recalling the conception of the city as forest that is visible in the opening section of *Berliner Kindheit um 1900*. But in this instance, the *flâneur* is granted an apparently panoptic mastery of the urban terrain. His 'visual rationalization' of the crowd as a collection of urban flora is comparable with the panoptic strategies that constitute a central element of Foucauldian disciplinarity. The ability that both protagonists display to 'read the crowd' suggests that they, much like the *flâneur*, are able to harness the rationalizing power of panopticism in order to dilute the perceived threat of urban anonymity.

A closer look at Benjamin's pronouncements on the crowd's character and the *flâneur's* relationship with it, however, suggests that the latter's panoptic mastery of the urban environment was merely provisional. The *flâneur's* knowledge of the crowd was predicated on a superficial optic that was unable to penetrate the true source of the crowd's threatening nature. As Tim McDonough suggests, this was circumscribed by the notion of the 'secret'. Quoting Goethe via Bulwer, Benjamin observes:

⁹⁰ Tim McDonough, 'The Crimes of the Flâneur', *October*, 102 (2003), 101-22 (p. 104).

⁹¹ Benjamin, 'Paris', p. 541. An entry in the *Passagenwerk* ascribes exactly this ability to the *flâneur*. Cf. *Passagenwerk*, p. 540, 'Das Phantasmagoria des Flaneurs: das Ablesen des Berufs, der Herkunft, des Charakters von den Gesichtern'.

⁹² Benjamin, 'Paris', p. 539.

⁹³ Benjamin, 'Paris', p. 539.

[...] jeder Mensch, der beste wie der elendeste, trage ein Geheimnis mit sich herum, das ihn allen andern verhaßt machen würde, sollte es bekannt werden.⁹⁴

Read against this background, the superficiality of the optic that Emilia and Dora deploy in their attempts to ‘read’ the urban crowd resembles their inability to penetrate the surface appearance of the city, a circumstance that has important implications for Stangl’s interpretation of the ways in which history has transformed urban inhabitants. In a more cynical reprise of the nostalgic re-imagining of the crowd quoted above, Emilia suggests toward the end of the novel that ‘in der Gegenwart gibt es keine Gesichter, nicht einmal Schauplätze, bloß Funktionen, Verkäuferinnen, Apothekerinnen, Friseurinnen, Bankbeamte, Polizisten [...]’ (*Musik*, p. 185). Emilia’s observations here necessarily render Benjamin’s pronouncements invalid. The reduction of the urban subject to a mere ‘Funktion’ perforce forestalls the possibility of his harbouring a ‘secret’, because it invalidates *a priori* any suggestion of inner life. Yet this circumstance also invalidates any mastery that might be gleaned from the ability to read the crowd, because the substitution of bodies with functions reduces individuals to mere manifestations of discourse, identifiable because of the degree to which they approximate idealized constructions. Thus, while Emilia and Dora’s ability to ‘read’ the crowd might initially suggest a form of panoptic mastery, it might also be said to hint at the all-pervasiveness of disciplinarity in the Vienna of *Ihre Musik*.

Yet an examination of the relationship that the novel sets up between the individual and the institution works against this assessment. In her dealings with both the university and the hospital, for example, Dora displays both an awareness of their disciplinary intentions and an ability to subvert these that is contingent primarily—although not exclusively—on the activity of urban walking. The first institution that we encounter—or, more accurately, do not encounter—in *Ihre Musik*, is the university. As we have seen, the first chapter narrates Dora’s walk through the first district to attend her *Rigorosum*. But even before she sets out, the university’s ability to act efficiently as a conduit of power-knowledge is called into question. The narrator observes of Dora that

⁹⁴ Benjamin, ‘Paris’, p. 540.

‘sie ist bereit, für die Institution knapp an dem vorbeizudenken, was sie interessiert, aber es gibt eine Grenze, die sie nicht überschreitet’ (*Musik*, p. 7). This points up the extent to which Certeau’s observations on the relationship between walking and the city—or between language and the speech act—can be mapped onto other institutions. The foregoing quotation suggests that the university attempts to control the creation of knowledge by dictating to Dora the focus of her intellectual inquiry, but that she is permitted certain flexibility within the prescribed framework that enables her to set her own ‘Grenzen’.

Dora’s ability to undercut the disciplinary intention of the university as institution is reinforced during the narration of her stroll through town, which underlines the simultaneous status of walking as an embodied practice that evades the subjectivating influence of the institution on the one hand, and as a key locus of intentionality on the other:

[...] sie hätte sogar Zeit, zu Fuß zu gehen und überquert auch schon die Geleise und die Nebenfahrbahn an der einige Autos parken, aber ihre Füße schlagen die andere Richtung ein, treffen für sie, die nichts zu denken braucht, eine kleine Entscheidung. In ihrer Brust kann ein Abgrund aufbrechen, und sie lernt zu fliegen, hebt ab, nah über den Decken der Innenstadt; sie genießt diese Leere und die nahe Möglichkeit der Verwandlung, während sie auf den ungewohnt hohen Absätzen Balance hält und sich im Gehen wiegt, so daß die Bewegung sich über Beine, Hintern und Rückgrat bis zu dem Nacken fortschiebt. Sie könnte noch immer in den Salzgries oder vom Hohen Markt aus in die Wipplingerstraße einbiegen, sie könnte es immer noch vorhaben. (*Musik*, p. 18)

The foregoing extract narrates Dora’s response to a number of behavioural norms that are encoded into the process of the *Rigorosum*. The perceived formality of the examination, for example, means that she is forced to dress for the occasion. As her need to keep her balance on the ‘ungewohnt hohe Absätze’ suggests, this convention has a potentially detrimental effect on her motility. Yet Dora’s response to this possible limitation figures it as the catalyst for a subjective experience that produces a combination of sensory impressions that are unique to her own corporeality. Dora is also able to assert a degree of agency by concentrating on particular elements of walking as a sensory experience. The narrator notes, for example, ‘[Dora] will nicht Halt machen, will sich auf die schmatzend feuchte Berührung ihrer Fußsohlen mit den Schuhen, die sich vom Stein und vom Beton abstoßen, konzentrieren’ (*Musik*, p. 18). It is also important to note that this control over the experience of walking is combined with assertions that highlight its status as a locus of intentionality,

one that, furthermore, has the potential to subvert the itinerary of the ideal walker. Rather than following the route prescribed by society—‘der nach den Regeln der Gesellschaft entscheidende Weg ist der in Richtung Innenstadt’ (*Musik*, p. 13)—Dora revels in the opportunity of taking a less direct route to her destination, thereby transgressing the normative expectations associated with the trajectory of the ideal walker. Perhaps the most conspicuous characteristic of the foregoing quotation, however, is the extent to which it underlines the primacy of the body as the determinant of the subject’s urban experience. The ‘kleine Entscheidung’, which Dora attributes to her feet, endows the body—abstracted here explicitly from the will of the subject—with a degree of agency. Significantly, the decision to change direction results in Dora’s non-attendance at her *Rigorosum*. This circumstance suggests that the body itself evades the subjectivating influence of the university, which manifests itself in the process of re-inscription that the acquisition of a doctorate is shown to entail.

The way in which the mechanics of this process are represented in *Ihre Musik* is indicative of a further method of subversion. As we saw in Chapter Two, the function of disciplinarity is contingent on the ability of disciplinary techniques to ‘mask a substantial part of [themselves]’.⁹⁵ In contemplating the *Rigorosum* and its hypothetical implications, Dora hints that she possesses a degree of awareness of the disciplinary intentions in which it is grounded:

Das Zimmer Nummer 432 des Neuen Institutsgebäudes, in dem das Rigorosum stattgefunden hätte, ist ein konturloser Ort im Hintergrund ihres Bewußtseins. [...] nur ein heller Tisch in der Mitte, eine Dreimanngruppe auf einer Seite des Tisches, die Kommission als vage Instanz, ein Gericht, das niemanden und nichts, worüber es richten konnte, keine Gesetzeskenntnisse und keine Bereitschaft, sich ins Gesetz zu fügen, findet auf der anderen Seite; wären es Menschen, sie würde gleich jeden vor sich sehen und sich selbst zu hassen beginnen, dort (irgendwo) redet man über sie, Dora D., das wenige, das man in der Institution [...] mit diesem Namen verbindet und das für sie selbst alles falsch ist [...]. Ein Fingerschnippen löscht die Räume: das Zimmer, das sie frisch umgestempelt als Frau Doktor (so würden sie, ohne Nachnamen, die Nachbarinnen, der Zahnarzt, die Handwerker, die Beamten von jetzt an nennen, so werden sie noch nennen) wieder ausgespuckt hätte [...]. (*Musik*, p. 36)

Various elements of the foregoing description stage the *Rigorosum* explicitly as a disciplinary mechanism. The room number and location are symptomatic of

⁹⁵ Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. by Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon, 1978), p. 146.

the gridding system that homogenizes the space of the disciplinary institution. The description also underlines the status of the *Prüfungskommission* as a privileged conduit of power-knowledge. Academic prowess is reduced here to the comprehension of a set of laws or norms, a circumstance that underlines the commission's ability to control the production of knowledge by confirming, contesting or manipulating the candidate's contribution to that knowledge. More significant for our purposes, though, is the fact that the language used here figures the *Rigorosum* explicitly as an inscribing practice. A successful result would have 'stamped' Dora as a doctor, thereby inscribing her within a discourse that would have at once divested her of her individuality and activated a set of conventions that would in turn have dictated her treatment by members of the same discursive regime. Yet it is the institution itself, rather than the members of the commission, which is figured here as the agent of Dora's hypothetical re-inscription. The 'Dreimanngruppe' that the commission consists of is explicitly dehumanized ('wären es Menschen, sie würde [...] sich selbst zu hassen beginnen' (*Musik*, p. 36)), and Dora imagines being 'abgestempelt' and 'ausgespuckt' by the room in which the examination takes place. The effects of this change in status are made clear when Dora, having eventually passed her *Rigorosum*, presents herself at the hospital after her symptoms worsen. Having been reprimanded by the doctor because she did not make an appointment sooner, Dora realizes that his manner would be different were he speaking to a patient without a doctorate '(Es gibt Dinge, mit denen spielt man nicht, würde er vielleicht sagen, wenn sie nicht den Titel vor ihrem Namen tragen würde)' (*Musik*, p. 108).

The subversion that is evident in Dora's description of the *Rigorosum*, though, goes beyond the exposure of its status as a disciplinary mechanism. Certain elements of Dora's description of the process in fact work to satirise it. This most obvious source of this satire is Dora's own absence from proceedings, which nullifies completely the subjectivating function of the *Prüfungskommission*, and, as she notes later in the same passage, renders them 'ratlos'. More subtle perhaps is Dora's fleeting realisation that the institution has little information that it can connect with the name 'Dora D'. In this context, reference to a surname and an initial might be construed as an oblique nod

toward the bureaucratic processes of information gathering and storage that are central to disciplinarity. But the inversion of this convention in Dora's attempt to re-imagine the scenario places emphasis on the particularity conferred by the forename. Furthermore, Dora claims that the information that the institution connects with her name 'für sie alles falsch ist' (*Musik*, p. 88). This gesture constitutes a rejection of the identity that the institution has constructed for her, allowing her, once more, to retain a sense of agency and self-determination and thereby to circumvent the machinations of disciplinary power.

A similar scenario occurs when Dora visits the doctor for the first time after waking up unable to move. On arrival, she implies that the décor in the waiting room is effectively one element of a disciplinary process that is designed to fabricate the body of the 'patient'. She notes: 'all das ist für sie da, für Leute wie sie, sie soll sich wohl fühlen' (*Musik*, p. 105). During her consultation with her doctor, Dora is once again subject to a process of re-inscription. Although only fragments of the discussion are replicated in the text, it is possible to conclude from these that the doctor has ventured a tentative diagnosis. He maintains

[...] es deutet einiges darauf hin, daß man hier wirklich genau abklären muß, ob nicht; es ist aber schon lange nicht mehr so, daß ein dramatischer Verlauf, selbst in dem möglicherweise bereits erreichten Stadium [...] geschweige denn bedeutet es heute ein Todesurteil, man kann die Sache mit Medikamenten gut in den Griff kriegen. (*Musik*, p. 110)

The process of diagnosis subjects the patient to the classificatory gaze of the medical practitioner, who, as Foucault suggests in the opening section of *The Birth of the Clinic*, 'maps' a disease onto the patient's body. This process is predicated on eliminating the subject's particularity because '[h]e who describes a disease must take care to distinguish the symptoms that necessarily accompany it from those that are only accidental and fortuitous, such as those that depend on the temperament and age of the patient'.⁹⁶ The patient is thus removed from the medical equation; he becomes, 'in relation to that which he is suffering from [...] only an external fact; the medical reading must take him into

⁹⁶ Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 7).

account only to place him in parentheses'.⁹⁷ The process of diagnosis thus involves the re-fabrication of the patient, his transfiguration into an 'ill body'. Once it has been diagnosed, Foucault suggests, 'the patient is the rediscovered portrait of the disease; he is the disease itself, with shadow and relief, modulations, nuances, depth [...]'.⁹⁸

As the remainder of the passage relating to the hospital visit suggests, though, the homogenizing influence of the doctor's gaze is not merely limited to the process of diagnosis, but also extends into the realm of treatment. This becomes clear as Dora begins to imagine how the disease will affect the course of her life:

Sie kann die Serie von Räumen bestimmen, die auf dieses Wartezimmer, dieses Behandlungszimmer [...] folgt, die ganz geordnete Bahn voraussehen, die sie in die Ambulanzen des Neuen Allgemeinen Krankenhauses (von vielen Punkten der Stadt aus sieht sie die beiden klobigen Türme) führen wird, unter das EEG und unter den MRT-Scanner, prickelnde Fühler an ihrem stillgestellten Schädel, eine Nadel in ihrem Rückenmark, ein lautloses Übersiehinwegfahren, ein lautloses Verschlucktwerden von den Geräten [...] aber [...] die Stimmen sagen, es ist unwahrscheinlich, daß es so weit kommen wird, daß sie doch immer wieder frei ist zwischen den Orten und den Terminen daheim, schmerzlos unberührt, Wochen oder Jahre lang, während die Sache sich entwickelt, sich entzündet und vernarbt, mit Medikamenten gefüttert und ruhig gehalten, ein eigenwilliges, kleines, körperloses Haustier [...]. (*Musik*, p. 111)

Two points are significant in the foregoing quotation. The first, and perhaps the more significant, is Dora's fear that she will become disembodied, 'von Geräten verschluckt' and transformed into 'ein [...] körperloses Haustier'. For N. Katharine Hayles, the subject's 'disappearance into technology' functions as a form of shorthand for the effect of disciplinarity on the body of the subject. In *How We Became Posthuman*, she notes that the bodies of those who are subject to 'disciplinary techniques' 'fade into the technology [...], becoming a universalized body worked upon by surveillance techniques and practices'.⁹⁹ Hayles's observations here can be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to Dora's hypothetical situation. MRI scans and EEGs bring techniques to bear on the universalized—but, as we have seen, ultimately parenthesized—body in order to diagnose disease and to monitor its progress. The second point to note is the

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 16.

⁹⁹ N. Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 27.

way in which Dora's illness will affect her perception of, and her trajectory through, the Austrian capital. Once more, Stangl points up the extent to which subject and city are intertwined. Just as the *Neues AKH* will necessarily become the element of the cityscape that provides the most obvious *Fixpunkt* for Dora, so its 'klobige Türme', which, significantly, are mentioned nowhere else in the novel, will begin to dominate her view of the city.

Other elements of Dora's visit to the hospital, however, suggest that, much like during her imagined encounter with the *Prüfungskommission*, she retains the ability to undermine the hospital's attempts to re-fabricate her subjectivity. During the doctor's diagnosis, for example, she wonders '(ja, warum soll sie ihm zuhören, dem Mann mit dem kurzgeschnittenen dunklen Haar, dem Bartschatten an den Wangen und dem weichen Kußmund, der den Kugelschreiber, während er spricht, zwischen den Fingern dreht)' (*Musik*, p. 110). Significant in the foregoing quotation is the combination of Dora's emphasis on the particularity of the doctor's facial features on the one hand, and on the other her refusal to acknowledge his status as a qualified medical practitioner. Dora's emphasis on the doctor's corporeal particularity jars with his status as the bearer of a disembodied gaze that 'endows [the doctor] with the power of decision and intervention'.¹⁰⁰ Once more, though, Dora's primary method of circumventing the disciplinary strictures of the hospital is through the activity of urban walking. She subsequently rejects both medication and the physiotherapy regimen that her doctors later prescribe for her, and limits her medical treatment to strolls through the city.

Dora's interaction with the institution, together with the function of the urban crowd in *Ihre Musik*, thus establishes a third locus of the body's 'triumph' over the city that is attributable to urban walking. Urban walking provides the protagonists with the ability at once to circumvent, and to appropriate, the disciplinary techniques that purport to structure both the city itself and the bodies that inhabit it. Urban walking thus allows the protagonists to test, and to transcend, the boundaries that the city sets for them. As Dora discovers, however, the 'victory' over the city is merely a provisional one. While walking

¹⁰⁰ Foucault, *Clinic*, p. 89.

allows the subject to circumvent subjection to socio-cultural institutions, it cannot transcend the limits that biology places on it. Through the narrative strand that is related to Dora's illness, Stangl shows that the greatest threat to the subject's autonomy is the fragility of the body itself.

THE RETURN OF THE BODY

We have already seen that Dora's physical decline provides perhaps the most significant plot-strand in *Ihre Musik*; indeed, I noted in the introduction Paul Jandl's opinion that Dora's diagnosis with multiple sclerosis constitutes a 'grausames Faktum' that holds together the novel's 'sonst nur ungefähre Wirklichkeit'. Yet Jandl's use here of the epithet 'grausam' in fact underplays the complexity of Dora's response to her illness. In what follows, I show that, during its initial stages, the symptoms of Dora's illness affect her in ways that intensify the particularity of her urban experience, thereby evincing parallels with the primary function of urban walking. While walking is figured in Stangl's novel as the mechanism that enables the body to 'triumph' over the city, however, it is perforce unable to triumph over itself. The later stages of Dora's illness are figured as a period of melancholic *Selbstentfremdung* in which the body is divested in the most explicit terms of its ability to determine the particularity of the subject's urban experience.

The first episode in which Dora contemplates comprehensively the ways in which her illness is affecting her occurs at the beginning of the fourth chapter. Dora sits once more in the *Volksgarten* reading her book. The corporeal sensations that Dora experiences as a result of her symptoms are narrated as follows:

Mit jedem Satz den sie liest [...] verschieben sich im Inneren ihres Körpers die Schwerpunkte: Felder von gesteigerter Wahrnehmung, einer kribbelnden Spannung und weiche tote Zonen liegen nebeneinander, wechseln die Orte [...] sie kann jeder Bewegung nachspüren, ihre Finger können in Erwartung von Antworten, Reaktionen, über ihre Haut streichen wie über die Haut eines anderen Menschen. (*Musik*, p. 134)

The foregoing quotation figures Dora's symptoms as producing sensations that add to, rather than detract from, her reading experience. The connection that Dora sets up between the sentences that she reads and the corporeal sensations

that she experiences points furthermore to a pronounced unity of body and mind which is seemingly altered, but not degraded, by the onset of Dora's symptoms. Later in the same passage, Dora realises that her symptoms have produced a state of heightened awareness:

[...] die Buchstaben, Wörter und Sätze, die weißen Seiten kehren zurück und haben jetzt schon [...] sogar an Deutlichkeit gewonnen, ihr scheint, dass sie nicht nur keinen einzelnen Satz je vergessen wird können, sondern ebensowenig den Augenblick des Lesens, den Anblick der Seiten, den Umschlag des Buches [...]. (*Musik*, p. 133)

The particularity of Dora's experience, and the ability of the ill body to maintain it, is underlined subsequently when Dora contemplates her previous visits to the doctor, whose suggestion of further medication and medical gymnastics she rejected. Dora's reasons for this rejection are significant. In another stubborn act of rebellion against her reconstitution by medical discourse, she refuses to be labelled and treated as 'eine Kranke'. Once more, her contemplation of her own situation sets against this universalizing discourse of illness the particularity of her own embodied experience, over which, she insists, she continues to exert a degree of agency.

Die Bewegungen ihrer Körperteile, die sie hervorruft und beobachtet, schaffen sich im Entstehen ihre eigenen Regel und Vorschrift, verschmelzen, in der bewußten Ausführung, der bewußten Beobachtung, mit der Regel und der Vorschrift, dem Plan: minimale Verschiebungen, während sie daliegt, das Gewicht des Buches in ihren Händen, in den Armen, auf der Brust spürt, als Zucken in ihren Beinen, in den Rückenmuskeln [...]. (*Musik*, p. 135)

Despite Dora's apparently optimistic interpretation of her situation, though, a number of significant points arise from the passage that surrounds it. First, the references to 'Regel' and 'Vorschrift' here may be said to imply already the extent of the subject's subjection to its own body. The suggestion that her movements are 'creating their own rules' sits uneasily with the implication that she is consciously performing them. Second, the unity that characterized the relationship between body and mind in Dora's narration of her reading experience is shown here not to extend to the body itself. Dora's reference to the individual parts of her body suggests the beginning of a process of fragmentation that, significantly, mimics the effects of the doctor's classificatory gaze. Third, and perhaps most important, Dora's increased penchant for reading can be seen as the first stage of a compensatory 'turn inward' that allows her to deny the physical effects of the disease.

This 'turn inward' takes on a different—and much more extreme—form in the second passage that deals directly with the onset of Dora's illness. On this occasion, Emilia pushes her daughter, now confined to a wheelchair—through a park.

Ihre Mutter schiebt den Rollstuhl [...] über den Sand und die kleinen Kiesel der Parkwege [...] sie hat die Augen weit offen und denkt, keiner der Menschen hier, deren Blick die junge Frau in dem Rollstuhl zugleich anzieht und abstößt, weiß, ob sie nicht blind oder schwachsinnig ist, sie ist ein Tier, sie spricht nicht [...]. Dora [...] starrt, während sich Lederriemen fest um ihre Schenkel schnüren und eine Faust sich um ihre Wirbelsäule schließt, die Passanten, deren Blick auf ihr Gesicht oder auf ihren Körper verirrt, von unten her an, bis sie rot werden oder das Gesicht abwenden. (*Musik*, p. 147)

The narration of Dora's outward appearance here suggests that the disease has reached a much more advanced stage: the state of heightened perception visible in the earlier passage has given way to sensations of extreme restriction and constraint. Yet Dora outwardly continues in her attempts to exert a certain mastery over the passers-by, whose gaze, much to their embarrassment, she stoically returns. Much more interesting, however, is an extract from later in the passage, which reveals an additional, more abstract method of subversion at Dora's disposal.

[...] über ihr ziehen mit unerwartbarer Eleganz [...] Tauben, Schließen am Himmel, über ihr und den exakten Parallelen und Diagonalen der Wege und Alleen, den grünen und grauen Flächen der Kinderplätze, Höfe, Sportplätze, Wiesen und Wäldchen, über den Mauern, den Dächern [...] Sie schließt die Augen [...]. Im Netz von steinernen Windungen und Furchen zwischen den flach erschienenen Dächern sind die Fußgänger und die Autos winzig geworden, kein Sturm ist nötig, sie denkt nicht an eine Rückkehr. (*Musik*, p. 147)

In a gesture reminiscent of her compensatory reanimation of the urban landscape, Dora's 'turn inward' here provides her with a means of transcending the limitations of her own body, as well as circumventing the collective gaze of the passers-by. But crucially, she is simultaneously able to achieve imaginatively a mastery of the urban environment which transcends that of the walking body. Dora's outward descent into a creaturely realm of dehumanized subjectivity, therefore, is transfigured 'internally' as an opportunity to overcome the restrictions that the body necessarily places on the subject.

This turn inward is completed during the final passage that deals with Dora's illness. Still alert, her cognitive functions intact, Dora sits, alone and immobile, in her armchair, trapped inside a body over which she no longer has

any control. 'Ihr Körper', notes the narrator 'ist ein hartes, unbewegliches Ding. Zugleich wird er weich und zerfließt' (*Musik*, p. 163). The silence imposed by Dora's illness contrasts sharply with the noise that is created by the objects that surround her, a technique that underlines the lack of agency that now marks Dora's body. While Dora sits in silence, her bedroom furniture, her floor, and the traffic outside remain capable of producing sound. Dora's attempts imaginatively to transform her circumstances fail, resulting merely in the reproduction of her situation on an imaginary cinema screen. Dora's total subjection to the restrictions that the disease has produced is underlined by a sharp contrast with the narrator's assessment of her cognitive abilities. He notes that 'jede Zelle in ihrem Gehirn ist gesund, wach, arbeitet, lässt sich auch durch Pillen nicht mehr betäuben, sie schläft nicht mehr'. Dora's final act is to throw herself out of her chair, an impulse to which her body is able to respond only with a wince. Overwhelmed with frustration, Dora 'wünscht sich eine Axt in ihrem Rückgrat' (*Musik*, p. 165).

My foregoing observations, then, suggest that Paul Jandl is half-right. Dora's disease does indeed insert a 'grausames Faktum ein in eine sonst nur ungefähre Wirklichkeit'. That 'Faktum', though, is not Dora's disease, but rather the extent of the subject's abject powerlessness to counteract the machinations of its own biology. As Gisela Wysocki notes, Stangl's novel gives plaintive expression to a 'Trauer darüber, wie sehr der menschliche Körper grundsätzlich in Gefangenschaft lebt'; but on Jandl's reading, this 'Gefängnis' is not, ultimately, the result of culture or of society, but of the limitations of the body itself.¹⁰¹

Thomas Stangl's *Ihre Musik*, then, gives more sustained expression to the developments whose origins I identified in *Es geht uns gut*. Stangl's representation of urban walking figures the body as the primary determinant of the subject's urban experience, endowing his protagonists with the ability to circumvent those elements of the cityscape that might work to limit or to control their trajectories through the city. The narrative strand related to Dora's illness, and its culmination at the end of the novel, provides a more dramatic and radical interpretation of the turn inward than is visible in Geiger's novel.

¹⁰¹ Gisela Wysocki, 'Doras Fallgeschichte', *Cicero: Online Magazine für politische Kultur*, <<http://www.cicero.de/salon/doras-fallgeschichte/44738?seite=3>>. [Accessed 2 July 2012].

Yet Stangl's engagement with the universal problem of illness also allows the critical resonance of his novel to transcend the borders of the Austrian nation. The extent to which Dora's struggle with multiple sclerosis dominates the plot suggests that any traces of a socially-critical engagement with Austria specifically have been evacuated from Stangl's novel. Yet one aspect of his representation of Vienna suggests that the socially-critical legacy of the *Anti-Heimatroman* may retain a limited degree of influence. As we have seen, Stangl's representation of Vienna divests the city of any authentic sense of historical depth.

CONCLUDING REMARKS:

THE INWARD TURN IN CONTEMPORARY AUSTRIAN WRITING

This thesis set out to explore how Vienna's re-emergence as a literary setting has impacted on the representation of Austrian realities in Austrian writing of the 1990s and 2000s. Situating their common analytical focus at the intersection between the body and the city, the five case studies presented here have identified three key trends.

The texts explored in this thesis attest to the body's gradual emancipation from the structures of the urban environment. The configurations of Vienna that are set forth in *Wiener Passion* attest to the body's complete subjection to the disciplinary mechanisms that structure urban space. In Rabinovici's *Suche nach M.*, meanwhile, the body takes on a compensatory role, replacing the city and the family as the primary bearer of history. The extent of the body's emancipation increases still further in the post-*Jahrtausendwende* texts that I have examined. The protagonists in Geiger's *Es geht uns gut* display a degree of mastery over the domestic and urban spaces that they inhabit. The body's mastery over urban space reaches its zenith in Stangl's *Ihre Musik*, where it acquires the ability not only to counteract those characteristics of the urban environment that work to control or to limit the subject's urban experience, but also to create its own space.

The body's increasing degree of mastery over space can be mapped onto the second key development identified in this thesis, which I characterize as a 'turn inward'. The significance of this transition is made apparent when it is set against dominant narratives of Austria's recent literary history. Klaus Zeyringer's *Innerlichkeit und Öffentlichkeit: österreichische Literatur der achtziger Jahre* identifies as a key characteristic of Austrian literature produced during the 1980s a profound transformation in Austrian writers' responses to events in the political sphere. In the wake of the Waldheim Affair, Zeyringer suggests, Austrian writers 'begannen [...] immer massiver auf politische

Zustände zu reagieren',¹ and appropriated the literary text as a primary vehicle for criticism and resistance. Drawing on the generic designation for the trend that dominated Germanophone literature during the 1970s, Zeyringer schematizes this *Wendepunkt* using a spatial metaphor. He describes it as a transition 'aus der Innerlichkeit [...] in die Öffentlichkeit [...]'.² The post-*Jahrtausendwende* texts that I discuss here, however, involve a transition that is diametrically opposite to Zeyringer's 'Schritt in die Öffentlichkeit'.³ My analysis of masculinities in *Es geht uns gut* suggests that the structural dynamics of the private sphere problematize the constructions of masculinity that operate at the level of nation. Geiger's prioritization of the private over the public, the familial over the national suggests a gradual shift in emphasis toward the private sphere. This contention is supported by the degree of emphasis that the novel places on the protagonists' struggles with their own (masculine) identities. In Stangl's *Ihre Musik*, the turn inward takes on a different, more radical character. The 'return of biology' inaugurated in the plot-strand that relates to Dora's battle against multiple sclerosis culminates in her 'incarceration' in an inert body over which she has no control.

Given Zeyringer's suggestion that Austrian writers' collective 'Schritt in die Öffentlichkeit' during the 1980s gave rise to a more trenchant, acerbic form of social criticism, the reversal of this tendency might reasonably be expected to imply a corresponding reduction in the potency and prominence of social criticism in the literary text. Both *Ihre Musik* and *Es geht uns gut* provide some evidence that this is the case. Elements of both novels—the narrative strand that relates to Philipp Erlach in *Es geht uns gut*, and the representation of history in *Ihre Musik* for example—might be construed legitimately as symptomatic of a critical engagement with the experience of contemporary Austrian realities. But the Austria-specific elements of social criticism in *Ihre Musik* and *Es geht uns gut* are secondary to the examination of such universal phenomena as the family, masculinity and corporeality. Yet as we have seen, the 'turn inward' can also be construed as a shift outward. Engagement with more

¹ Klaus Zeyringer, *Innerlichkeit und Öffentlichkeit: österreichische Literatur der achtziger Jahre* (Tübingen: Francke, 1992), p. 95

² Ibid.

³ Ibid, p. 94.

generic social issues allows the critical resonance of Austrian writing to extend beyond the borders of the national community. Nevertheless, the reduced prominence of the socially-critical impulse in the works of the youngest authors discussed here does suggest a nascent transformation in their attitude to Austrian history. While this cannot yet legitimately be said to correspond to the 'deliberate break away from [...] more historically-concerned [...] representations' that Broadbent identifies in work produced by the 'new generation' of Berlin writers,⁴ it nevertheless suggests a turn away from the literary *Aufarbeitung* of Austria's past that was of central concern in Austrian writing of the 1970s and 1980s.

Given Klaus Zeyringer's insistence that critical engagement with Austrian literature must seek 'eine Differentialdiagnose zu erstellen, 'die von den Symptomen zu den Ursachen vorzudringen gewillt ist',⁵ this thesis must necessarily seek to account for the dialectical nature of the 'turn inward' through reference to the broader cultural, political and social spheres that have contributed to Austria's gradual evolution as a national community. Most significant amongst these is undoubtedly Austria's changing role in the European context. Having joined the European Union in 1995, Austria's geopolitical position in Europe underwent further changes as a result of the EU's phased *Osterweiterung* in 2004 and 2007. Austrian literature's increased awareness of, and engagement with, the transnational context, which, incidentally, is evidenced particularly in work produced by Geiger's and Stangl's contemporaries such as Raul Schrott and Daniel Kehlmann, constitutes one possible reaction to this development. The same could, however, also be said of the turn inward that this thesis has identified in the novels produced by the younger authors discussed here. Increasing engagement with the corporeality, existential security and gendered identity of the individual subject is symptomatic of an attempt to instrumentalize the body as a guarantor of stable subjectivity. As Stangl's novel suggests, however, the body's ability to fulfil this

⁴ Philip Broadbent, 'Generational Shifts: Representing Post-Wende Berlin', *New German Critique*, 35 (2008), pp. 139-169, p. 141.

⁵ Klaus Zeyringer, *Österreichische Literatur seit 1945: Überblicke, Einschnitte, Wegmarken* (Vienna; Innsbruck; Bosen: Studienverlag, 2008), p. 42.

function is at once contingent and temporary. The body's capacity to disrupt the coherence of the subject in fact far outweighs the destabilizing potential that can legitimately be ascribed to global—or indeed urban—space.

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